

of the immediate designs of the crafty deceiver. Thus the language falls, having passed from the more composed beginning soon to the highest excitement,—gradually down to greater rest, until at last all feelings are silent in the *one* thought of rest and hope in God. Thus at first the poet, on his cry for help, is soon so overpowered by the representation of the greatness of the villainy committed, that he calls upon God anew—instead of to save him—to punish him in the most sensible manner, if he should do as the enemy. Here his feeling and his language become even more unrestful and stormy the more clearly he represents to himself the villainy committed, vv. 2, 3, 4-6. But the more zealously he wishes that such villainy might receive retribution in his own person (were it necessary), the more boldly, after a pause, does he cry to God to punish the wrong actually done. And since private persons were not concerned, but the fates of whole tribes and peoples, he appeals for an universal judgment to be held upon the earth. This freer glance of prophetic outlook into the eternal Divine operation and into all the future, wonderfully calms the storm of the poet's bosom, and softens his language, vv. 7-12; so that at last, again recalling what is immediately before him, he foresees as certain that the foe will renew his treachery, but also in loftier calm, looks beyond to the speedy destruction in which his craft and malice will end, while the faithful evermore rejoices in God, vv. 13-18.

The proper and peculiar art of this song lies in the fact that the poet understands how to bring to a proper and perfect level, and to smooth down all the storm of his bosom and the fluctuations of his thoughts in the remembrance of God, and so in the expression and flow of his language, by means of a loftier mood of calmness, which becomes victorious. Thus it falls into three somewhat extended proportionate strophes, each of six verses, the first two of thirteen, the last of twelve verse-members. In each the first two verses are strongly separated from the last four. Between the first and second



lies the highest excitement; the first rising to the acmé of unrest, the second sinking down from that point. At the end of the second, rest and largeness of view are already won. But the third gives further the application of this to immediate circumstances. More briefly: in the first part the force of complaint predominates; in the second rest returns through the contemplation of the eternal Divine righteousness. In the third we have the joyous and tranquil glance, thence arising, towards the immediate danger. Thus this song is a splendid example of the manner in which, even in extreme danger and unrest, higher contemplations yield true hope and rest, pacifying the storm of the passions.

## 1.

- 1 Jahvé, my God! to Thee I cleave:  
     from all my persecutors, help, deliver me!  
 that he tear not like a lion my soul,  
     rending asunder without saviour!  
 Jahvé, my God! if I do *this*,  
     if iniquity is in my hands;  
 5 if I my friend with evil recompense

. . . . .  
 . . . . .

I delivered him who oppressed me without cause—  
 then let the enemy pursue, take my soul,  
     and tread to the ground my life,  
 and my greatness let him pin to the dust!\*

## 2.

Up, Jahvé, with Thy wrath,  
     lift Thyself up with the punishment of my oppressors!  
 stir Thyself for me, appointing judgment!  
     and let the community of the peoples surround thee,  
 and above them do Thou return to the height!—

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\* The Séla is in this impression so denoted.



Jahvé judges the peoples : give sentence concerning me,  
O Jahvé !

according to right, according to innocence let it be  
done to me !

But let the evil of the wicked pass away, so that thou 10  
strengthen the righteous man,

Thou trier of heart and reins, O righteous God !

My shield stands with God,

who helps the upright in heart ;

God is a judge of the righteous,

yet a God who is angry every day.

3.

It may be He will again wet His sword ;

the bow he already bends and directs,

prepares death weapons for himself,

makes His arrows burning.

But lo ! he will hatch vanity,

pregnant with mischief, he will bring forth deceit ; 15

a grave he digged, hollowed it deep

and fell into the abyss which he makes !

His mischief will turn upon his head,

upon his crown his cruelty rush down !

O praise I Jahvé according to His righteousness,

and sing Jahvé's, the All-highest's Name !

xix., ver. 3. The transition here into the *sing.*, shows, as frequently, that the poet now, in the representation of the main danger, thinks more closely of the enemy at that time especially in pursuit of him, or of the leader of his enemies : comp. vv. 13-17. But he who threatens the poet with danger to his life is also that most faithless friend, whose treason has just been ascertained ; and the feeling of the baseness of this treason seizes so violently on the poet that he immediately, vv. 4-6, imprecates on himself the extremest punishment from God, if he should do *the like*. *לֹאֵל*, ver. 4, more closely explained by ver. 5, and the



*perf.* vv. 4 and 5, is only explained in this connexion by § 355 *b*. But, in fact, he *cannot* so act. The faithless friend alone has broken the covenant; then against him be the penalty! ver. 7 ff.—The second half of ver. 5 expresses plainly the opposition—how that the poet is not merely incapable of requiting good with evil; but, on the contrary, has shown kindness and saved the life of the enemy who wars upon him without cause. This is eminently appropriate to David's famous magnanimity, 1 Sam. xxiv. 26, and thereby the sense is truly completed. The ? should here of itself express the contrast; but this in the present connexion is too impossible. Much more probably two whole clauses have here been lost, somewhat as follows:

אם גמלתי שלמי רע  
 { וְשִׁנְאַתִּי אֶשְׂלֹם אֶהְבֵּי }  
 { אִם לֹא קָעַלְתִּיו טוֹב תַּחַת רָע }  
 ואחלצה

that is:

*if I do ill to my ally,  
 and with hostility reward my friend,  
 if I requited not his evil with good,  
 and delivered . . . .*

The over-sudden transition is thus softened; but the best confirmation of this hypothesis is furnished by the circumstance that in this way each of the three strophes would uniformly consist of six verses.—Ver. 7: *with* thine anger, bringing thine anger, or, as the following clause explains, the punishment of thine enemies (§ 176 *b*).—On the perfect צוּיָה, comp. lxxi. 3, and § 341 *b*. The imagination of the poet reviews here the whole grand process—how the judge appoints judgment, around him all peoples throng to receive justice, and He, when the process is finished, high above the great host, again soars up to heaven (*to the height*, xviii. 17), so, in vanishing, showing clearly to all that He is the highest judge: comp. Judges xiii. 20; Isa. iii. 13.—Ver. 10: בּוֹחֵן for בּוֹחֵן



according to the LXX Pesch.; the same transposition of the  $\gamma$  is found lv. 20; Ezek. xiii. 7; 2 Sam. xiv. 14 (*Gesch.* iii., p. 237).—Ver. 11:  $\text{לֵב}$  it lies *upon* him, to protect me, lxii. 8.—Ver. 13:  $\text{אֵלֵּי}$ , as an oath, as elsewhere; *certainly* He will, &c. The dependent proposition begins plainly with the sharp  $\text{הִנֵּה}$  ver. 15.\* The  $\text{וְלֵב}$ , ver. 14, is without emphasis, inserted after  $\gamma$ , § 307 b. From vv. 13-17 the same subject only. On vv. 13, 14, comp. quite simply xi. 2. The poet certainly anticipates that the enemy would soon afresh in craft purpose to slay him. With ver. 17, as very similar, agrees 1 Sam. xxv. 39.

The next songs which can be discovered in David's life are the two dirge-songs which were not adopted into the Psalter, see Vol. I, pp. 149 sq., and p. 141.† From the grand time when David, anointed to be king over all Israel, took his seat in conquered Jerusalem, and there also appointed to the ark of the covenant its abode, we have, however, in the Psalter immediately the song—

### 3. PSALM XXIV. 7-10.

This is plainly the festive song wherewith the ark of the covenant was brought to Sion, and there obtained its firm seat, 2 Sam. vi. It is fully characterized by the cheerful mirth and innocence, the figurative simplicity and high nature-poetry, of the Davidic time. Whilst one half of the priests are stationed at the gate to receive the sacred ark and bring it to its place in the city, it is brought ever nearer to the gate by the other half. The alternate song which thus becomes possible (i., p. 49)† is built on the thought on the one side of Jerusalem, on the

\* It is not necessary to show in detail how on all original grounds it is entirely incorrect and unworthy to explain *if he* (the enemy) *turns not*, i.e., does not improve, *He will*, that is, God, *wet his sword*, &c. Anything so grossly sensuous and lowering, as if the true God were only a Jew, the Bible nowhere expresses of Him. The apparently very similar places which might here be appealed to, are not similar.

† *Dichter des A B.*, i.



other of the sanctuary of this only God. In the following manner:—

Into the ancient venerable city a new king must now pass, and he the highest and mightiest conceivable—Jahvé himself, throned on His ark of the covenant; for this king, whose equal never entered this city, the grey gates, venerable in their antiquity, are too small and petty (for the height of the gates must answer to the dignity of the entering lord of the house), so that sometimes gates of extraordinary height were built;\* let them then lift themselves up and renew themselves! so cry to them from afar those who accompany the new king. But each new demand excites at first merely astonishment, and the authority of the old king rises against it. Therefore the grey gates do not immediately obey; but the inquiry sounds back first from them: Who the new king is? And then he is more exactly described in his glory, and anew resounds the demand upon the gates; new responsive inquiry, new answer, with still more exact designation of the highest attribute of the new ruler, so that the doors at last silently obey, whilst at the same time the thronging train arrives, and as the ark of the covenant enters, the old gates rise to new dignity and height.

Thus this little song serves with true appropriateness for the novelty of this solemn train; and imperceptibly the exalted God of Israel in all His dignity is also praised as the mighty God of war, to whose rule Sion must be subject. David may, without difficulty, be considered the poet.

1.

Lift, gates, your heads;  
 lift yourselves, gates of eld,  
 that the glorious king may enter in!  
 "Who is then the glorious king?"  
 Jahve, the mighty and hero,  
 Jahvé, the hero of war!

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\* Comp. Prov. xvii. 19; *Jour. As.*, 1856, ii., p. 479; Munzinger's *Ostafrikanische Studien*, p. 328, 5, 6.



## 2.

Lift, gates, your heads ;  
lift them, gates of eld,  
that the glorious king may enter in !  
“ Who is, then, the glorious king ? ”  
Jahvé of hosts ;  
He is the glorious king !

The most significant point in the alternation of these two strophés is manifestly that the one designation *Jahvé of Hosts* in the second must be much weightier than all the three in the first. Great is Jahvé already as the *Mighty One and Hero*, or more definitely as the *Hero of War*, as He once approved Himself, Ex. xv. 3, and now again in the latest time ; but incomparably higher is he still as *Jahvé of Hosts*, so that as soon as this name, short as it is, resounds, all bow before him. Thus we feel that at that time this Divine Name passed for the newest, most adequate, and, as it were, most magical, seeming, by the sense of its singular juxtaposition, to point to a mysterious Infinite. How this is to be historically understood, is further explained in the *Gesch. des V. Isr.*, iii., p. 87 of the third edition.

Since, now, under David and Solomon a great frequentation of the new sacred place in this new and higher time certainly very early set in, poetry might hold it appropriate, in explaining the dignity of the place and protecting the truth, to teach that only the pure man was worthy of the holy place, and only he in visiting it, would obtain salvation and blessing, Ps. xxiv. 1-6, Ps. xv. Here, therefore, short, but very clear and powerful pictures of the true Israel are sketched, and we can thence briefly see what demands that time made on each man among the people. Thus these songs, designed for the instruction of the whole people, probably sung by alternate choirs of priests before the sanctuary, have a very great historical significance. They also afford the first example in



this place of an application of poetic art to teaching. Most expressive and rich in contents, also the oldest, and breathing entirely the same spirit as the song, presently to be explained, Ps. ci., is of the two

4. PSALM XXIV. 1—6.

After preparation has been made by a brief lofty description of Jahvé as Creator and Sustainer of the whole earth and of all men, for the thought of the nature and dignity of this Supreme God, vv. 1—2, it is asked, Who is worthy to tread His holy place? ver. 3. And there sounds back the suitable reply that only *he* in whom there has been a preparation of goodness, and who thus for the higher strength seeks God, can bear from the sanctuary increasing strength and salvation as his reward. Thus peculiarly the whole community of Jahvé should be disposed, and be blessed, vv. 4—6. Two strophés in calmest language, each of three verses, and 6—7 verse-members. How ancient is this song appears from the fact, that in context and form it echoes Isa. xxxiii. 14—16.

1.

1       Jahvé's is the earth and its fulness,  
           all land and they who therein dwell;  
       for *He* has founded it on seas,  
           and on streams He now holds it fast.—  
       Who will ascend Jahvé's mountain?  
           who stand at His holy place?

2.

      “He who is of pure hands, of clean heart,  
       lifts not his pleasure to vanity,  
       and swears not for deceit :  
 5       he will receive blessing from Jahvé,  
       and righteousness from the God of his salvation.  
       Such are they who seek him,  
       who seek thy countenance, Jakob's God !”



According to ancient opinion, the earth, as it is plainly described in ver. 2, is a plane surface, rising out of the water, surrounded by the stream of Ocean; for the water seems everywhere deeper, and even under the earth springs and rivers appear to confirm this. The looser therefore this ground the more wonderful appeared the holding of the firm land, supported by mountains like deepest pillars, cxxxvi. 6, Prov. viii. 27, 29; Gen. i. 2, 9, 10.—Ver. 4. נִשְׁפָּט the reading, after xxvii., Prov. xix. 18. According to the Q'rî the sense would be: he who pronounces not to evil (impiously)—Ex. xx. 7—my soul, *i.e.*, me, swears not falsely by me; but neither does Jahvé here speak, nor is that explanation in itself easy; for in that case we expect נִשְׁפָּט for the here unsuitable נִשְׁפָּט. —Ver. 5. *Right* often thus is found beside *Salvation*, *Righteousness* along with *blessing*, as consequence and recompense proceeding from God for goodness. For the pure original right is indeed, in general, eternal in God, and maintained by Him. But not until the individual man approaches him and virtually seizes upon it, does it become for him right—fruitful and active right—a right which is thus identical with *salvation* and *blessing*, and is frequently interchanged in expression with these. Comp. xxiii. 3, xxii. 32, especially cxxxii. 9 with ver. 16. Conversely, עֲוֹן unrighteousness, sin = perdition, suffering, xxxi. 11. Before עֲוֹן ver. 6, אֱלֹהֵי is to be inserted from the LXX, Pesch., and a few copies. The turn of the language to address is at the close very appropriate. But precisely because it is new, the name of God cannot well be wanting, whilst “Jakob” as a name of the people would stand here at the last altogether too isolated. It must have been understood emphatically of the true “Jakob,” or the ideal Israel. But for this there is here no ground at all; and the higher sense would be in nowise suggested and intelligible.

But here, plainly, the song is entirely at an end; it has an external conclusion, and, moreover, it is internally completed.



vv. 7—10 must form an entirely different song, and have also an entirely different meaning and object. In the second song Sion must first receive the ark of the covenant and become a holy city. In the first it is already the ordained holy place. The second must be older by some years. The first is a purely didactic song, and Jahvé appears as the God of all men; the second a song of victory and Jahvé a God of war. The beauty of the question, ver. 8, would be entirely lost, if Jahvé were already named. Every transition and every bond of union in words and thought is wanting; in opposition to which each song shows for itself a full clearness and completeness. In common both are distinguished merely by a high antiquity, and both refer to Sion. Theirs is therefore no original connexion.

#### 5. PSALM XV.

Is also ancient, yet somewhat more recent than the previous song, and more like an early copy of it. Here the further exposition of a part of the preceding only is new; the description of the Pure man, which appeared to a poet to be all too short and general in the preceding song, ver. 4, and which is here further portrayed in detail with great impressiveness. But to the above object diligence is here only applied; and it is incontestably no accident that it is a series of exactly *ten* propositions to which here the whole life of the pious man is referred.\* The fine introduction and completion of the preceding song is wanting here, in regard to material. For the rest, the language is not held here as in the preceding song, merely of those who come to visit the sanctuary. It is also the stated dwellers in Jerusalem of whom the poet speaks. They carelessly suppose that as dwellers near the holy place they shall ever dwell in security and happiness. Unquestionably this belief was the peculiar means of peopling the holy

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\* Comp. the *Gesch. des V. Isr.*, ii., p. 239 of the third edition



city, and that increasingly. But the more powerfully does the poet here speak against the superstition which was so readily connected with that belief; comp. Isa. xxxiii. 14-16, Ps. l.

Jahvé! who shall sojourn at thy tent? 1  
 who dwell upon Thy holy mountain?  
 He who walks sincerely, who practises right,  
 Who in heart speaks truth,  
 harbours not slander on his tongue,  
 doeth not ill to another,  
 raises not reproach against his neighbour;  
 To whom vileness seems contemptible,  
 but who honours the fearers of Jahvé;  
 who has sworn to his hurt and changes it not;  
 who gives not his money to usury, 5  
 nor takes bribes against innocence:—  
 who does *this*, shall never waver!

From the *dwelling*, ver. 1, it might readily be imagined that strangers ordinarily remained a longer time at the sanctuary, *e.g.*, for a week, or took in the city a stated dwelling always standing open to them; the like of which is now done at Mekka, comp. Burckhardt, "Arabic Proverbs," n. 480 on *djawr* = גִּוֵּר. But in fact the song has in view rather the constant inhabitants of Jerusalem, as is especially clear from the conclusion, ver. 5 c.—Ver. 3 to the last clause of ver. 5 is the relative clause, begun at ver. 2, continued from the participle through all verbal moods, as they are suitable, according to § 350 b. Ver. 4, נִבְיָאָה better suits the thought, taken as neuter (Isa. lviii. 13, and especially similar, Ps. xxxvi. 5) than as masculine. The poet seems to suggest this also by putting in the opposition, where the person may also be very well spoken of, the plural. But if it were proposed to take the words in this way, *who thinks himself contemptibly unworthy*, something quite incorrect would thereby be expressed, not God, but men forming the opposition. The words, too,



according to 1 Sam. xv. 17, 2 Sam. vi. 22, would rather run *לְרַעְיוֹתָי וְקָטַן בְּעֵינָיו*. That *לְרַעְיוֹתָי* cannot be so much as *לְרַעְיוֹתָי* ver. 3, is plain from grammar and usage, the Massora rightly treats it as infinitive Hiph. The phrase is thus formed precisely as *לְרַעְיוֹתָי וְקָטַן בְּעֵינָיו* with the active infinitive *he swears*, so that he speaks imprudently = *imprudently*, Levit. v. 4; and the sense would be: *he swears* so that he does evil, hurts, = *to hurt*, of course his own (it might be supposed, that *לְרַעְיוֹתָי* was wanting before *וְקָטַן בְּעֵינָיו*, yet the phrase appears to have been intelligible without this *לְרַעְיוֹתָי*). The description would then be entirely suitable in this connexion: who does not alter (violate) his oath because he learns by and bye that he has taken an oath to his own hurt, but esteems the oath more sacred than his advantage. On the *not taking interest*, ver. 5, comp. the *Alterthümer*, pp. 207 sq. The conclusion: "he will never waver," corresponds directly, advancing a step in the thought, to the question at the beginning. For the full sense is: he will not merely be worthy to dwell at the sanctuary, but also rewarded and strengthened with eternal blessing, will never vacillate, will be maintained by a higher power. But the first half of this proposition is readily understood of itself by the second, which is loftier and more expressive.

#### 6. PSALM CI.

would now in order of time immediately follow Ps. xxiv. 7-10. The poet, as a king of mighty authority, may readily be discovered to be David; for David's higher genius is throughout expressed. Sion has already become the seat of David and the house of Jahvé, ver. 8; but as yet all things are not ordered and made, even in the new administration of David. The new state has to be more firmly developed, especially the surroundings of the king, on the character of which, according to the fashion of the old kingdom so much depends, have to be selected and sifted. David himself is still standing on the steps of a general decisive period, not strong and armed



enough in the inner man for the difficult, the progressive task of his future life. Yet even in this first period of the rule in Jerusalem, in the splendour of victory, and of the newly-obtained crown over all Israel, in a time also when lesser princes were so readily blinded and overcome by the treacherous brilliance of prosperity, or had given way before their difficult task, David feels himself all the more urged to enlighten and strengthen his own heart in the constant praise of Jahvé, and His virtues, and in unwearied longing endeavour after Him. He desires to apprehend the true principles for the conduct of a government equally strong and just; and therefore to hold far from his heart every evil intention, and in like manner from his court every common thing,—every flatterer, slanderer, and wicked man. But already the new sanctity of this city now chosen as the seat of Jahvé, demands, that least of all should unholiness be suffered in it. He who begins his rule with such intentions, as they here gush forth in guileless simplicity, is bound to end it happily. Nothing opens to us so clearly all the nobleness and the powerful light of David's soul than this short song. For the song is like a brief involuntary outburst of clear, long-cherished sensibility, without further artificial desire entirely to exhaust the thought. And as in the heart of David there is but this *one* great sentiment, this *one* endeavour completely fills his mind, and is expressed here in *one* burst; so the whole song forms an indivisible whole, breaking only into two quite similar restful strophés, each of four verses, and eight mostly long verse-members; correctly, however, with such progress, that in the second the poet looks more freely about and beyond himself into the world. The predominance of the long verse-members is the more suitable because the whole is presented as a self-contemplation.

## 1.

Mercy and Right let me sing,  
to Thee, O Jahvé, play!

1



let me observe the guileless way,—when wilt Thou come  
to me?—

walk in my house in guilelessness of heart!

Will not before my eyes set wickedness;

Work of the False do I hate, it shall not cleave  
to me!

crooked heart shall depart from me,

Evil will I not know!

2.

5 Who secretly slanders his neighbour, him will I  
destroy;

who is of proud eyes, of swelling heart—him endure I  
not:

on the faithful of the land I look, that they may dwell  
with me;

who walks in the guileless way—he shall serve me.

There shall not dwell in my house he who works deceit;

who speaks lies—shall not stand before my eyes:

watchfully will I destroy all the wicked of the land,

in order out of Jahvé's city,—to root out all evil-  
doers!

The poet begins with the thought of the Divine virtues of grace and justice, since the king, who before all other men, should exhibit them in his life, after the Divine example, cannot sufficiently reflect upon these and praise them. But thus the song is at the same time an ascription of praise to Jahvé. The poet has indeed often already reflected upon these virtues, often already aspired to Jahvé, and to an even, blessed life, entirely laid hold of and led by Jahvé. That his earlier endeavour was not fruitless, is shown by the very manner of this song. But not yet is the goal reached; anew he exhorts himself to new intensified carefulness and fidelity, hoping that at last,—what he so deeply longs for,—Jahvé will entirely and abidingly come to him and dwell in him. The doleful question



and prayer *יְהוָה*, etc., thus contains, although only compressed in the flight of the language, a main thought. And it is readily understood that the coming of God is here not an external one, or one visible by an external token. Neither the narrative of 2 Sam. vi. 9, nor the yet earlier modes of speech, Gen. xx. 3, Ex. xx. 24, must be brought into comparison. From ver. 3 onwards the strongly-moved language becomes softer, whilst the poet depicts what he feels and calmly wishes as his firm resolution. If *יְהוָה* could be taken as an *abstraction*, the inf. *עֲשֵׂה* would most readily suit: *to do falsenesses* (properly departures from the true) *I hate*. But Hos. v. 2 (where *שָׁחַת* = *שָׁחַת*, ix. 9) is opposed to this; and the *sing.* *עֲשֵׂה* speaks more in favour of the actual doing being here the subject. *Doing of the false, i.e.*, so to do as false men do, hence *עֲשֵׂה* was not necessary, but, on the contrary, *עֲשֵׂה* may then be formed according to § 150 b. *עֲשֵׂה* must be adjective equally with *עֲשֵׂה*, *עֲשֵׂה*; quite otherwise *עֲשֵׂה* with *עֲשֵׂה*, which comes from *עֲשֵׂה* (which is here stated with more exactness than in § 146 e). Ver. 4 quite as xviii. 23 ff.; ver. 7 *עֲשֵׂה* quite as xxxii. 2. Ver. 5, *עֲשֵׂה* *wide*, extending itself, swelling heart, when external pride and haughtiness, that of the eyes, penetrates also the innermost man in covetousness and self-seeking. Prov. xxi. 4, xxviii. 25. Ver. 8 *עֲשֵׂה* every morning, *i.e.*, always with the greatest zeal, early beginning each day with fresh energies, as the similar lxxiii. 14. In the repeated mention of the *house*, vv. 3, 6, 7, we readily observe that only as great a king as David could thus speak,—he from whose new habitation in Jerusalem rule went literally forth over the wide kingdom, and who, like no later king, could call all Jerusalem *his*, and look upon it as *his home*, without overlooking the fact that it was at the same time the city of a still Higher One.\*

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\* No one, *e.g.*, will here think of King Hizqia, who accurately knows him and his time, or even only his song, l. pp. 161 sq. (*Dichter des A. B.*)



Here is, perhaps, the most suitable place to insert the three nature-songs which originated so independently of the external history that we are absolutely unable to offer conjectures respecting the definite period of their origin.—Such *nature songs* are indeed rare. They are, in that beauty and freedom in which they here appear, peculiar to the age of the highest bloom of lyric poetry. Later, when the force of the Israelitish spirit even more narrowly confined itself to other objects, and at last even the poetic impulse became dormant, there resound at most a few weak echoes, Ps. civ. Again, they did not spring from a learned acquaintance with nature, but only from particular movements of higher excitement or contemplation, when either an extraordinary natural phenomenon, thrusting itself upon notice with fearful violence, awakens a poet to deeper contemplation (Ps. xxix); or, conversely, a poet finds confirmed by the consideration of Nature, the truths that have welled up in his mind from other suggestions (Pss. viii., xix.). Hence it is at most but particular sides of Nature at first, a few great marvellous phenomena which seize upon the singer's mind, and the contemplation is opened, not in long pictorial representations, but in brief suggestive traits and hints. The object and impulse of the poet is not to describe nature, but full of Divine thoughts and open to nature, he apprehends and depicts her as she moves before him full of God and revealing God to him. But, considered more closely, there lies in this very circumstance a great superiority in these few songs; for here is nature-poetry, neither anxiously laboured and forced, nor artificial and petty; but the impression which the grandeur, splendour, and order of nature involuntarily produces upon a pure poet's heart, here finds its bright mirror; and because an Israelitish poet especially in presence of nature can never forget the living God, there shines out of all these poems the genuine connexion of poetic thoughts on God and nature, whilst to the poet even nature becomes for the first time inspired with life and capable of being understood



through its Lord. In this way, such songs, little as they may have this in view, are yet always at the same time songs of praise to Jahvé. In this style, and in the quite peculiar sublimity of poetry, all three songs resemble one another. They may be termed the old Hebrew nature-songs, and the mutual likeness is so complete that their derivation from the same poet becomes thereby obvious.

(7.) PSALM XXIX.

The poet must have recently experienced a violent tempest, so that the feeling of it still vibrates through him, and the picture of it still stands most vividly before his soul. Let us represent to ourselves the rare, but when it does occur, the more fearful spectacle of a Southern, especially a Palestinian tempest, as it seems in a few moments, with loudest crashing, to bring the whole creation into uproar, destroys the high and the low, breaking the highest trees on the mountains, convulsing the lower wastes. It is a piece of good fortune if it passes the cities quietly by. Nothing, in fact, has the power to bring the omnipotence of the heavenly God so near to the feeling of the ancient Hebrews, nothing so strongly to show him the relation between heaven and earth, and the operation of the former upon the latter.\* Particularly, the most forcible Divine judgment is frequently thought of under the representation of such a tempest, Isa. xxx. 27-30.

The poet, indeed, now conceives in this song of that storm, the sublime scene of which thus trembles in his soul, as a Divine judgment; but at the same time this feeling is in him glorified to a still higher picture in the free glance upward to heaven, whence the storm comes, and down to earth, which is smitten by it. This most violent natural experience appears to him to set forth, beyond aught else, clearly and sensibly, the living connexion itself between heaven and earth. First,

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\* Comp. in David himself further, Ps. xviii. 7 sq.



because God Himself, the Invisible, He who sojourns unapproachably as in the furthest heights, He so often in vain longed for by His people, now actually as it were brings Himself again near to the earth and to His own, and makes Himself as strongly as possible sensible to them.\* Secondly, because the tempest is raised, as if quietly and unobservedly, in the most inaccessible, remotest heights of heaven, then, with a mighty crash, suddenly rushes through the world, and leaves its traces behind in the very depths of the earth, so that all things without exception in the world, from the extremest height to the lowest deep, once again experience the power of God. But in what entirely different ways do the different parts of this world experience it! And to depict this with all brevity as picturesquely as possible, is a main object of the song. There, in the mysterious heaven, where the storm seems to gather unobserved, and whence thunders, like Divine words of power, resound and terrify the whole earth, is this like all the Divine manifestations and actions prepared. It may also be beheld more nearly, more purely in its origin and objects from the first, as it were, by the higher spirits who surround the throne of God. But yonder there is nought but joy and jubilation over such a voluntary new revelation of the Highest. On the earth, on the other hand, and in the world, the manifold variety of creatures are dumb and resistant. Here *His* mighty thunder prevails, and whilst the clouds bear *Him*, the mountains and forests and all that lives here below must tremble and break before Him,—man also, even his own people, must pass away before Him, if it were not they who could rejoice again at this His coming, even in such an uproar of the whole world,—rejoice in the fructifying traces of His presence. Thus even in this most fearful manifestation they may rather revere a token only of the omnipotence and of the omnipotent nearness of their Lord, who, even as He is able to

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\* Comp. the *Gesch. des V. Isr.*, ii., pp. 534 sq. More feebly and obscurely the same feeling pervades also Indian songs, as is seen from the later *Mêghadûta*.



dominate the tempestuous storm, yea, anew to fructify the land by its means, so also amidst all the storms of the peoples, can ever anew strengthen His people. Thus human fear is resolved, by the contemplation of the Omnipotence that trembles through the world, into joy, and into that rock-like confidence in the true God which distinguish the earlier times of Israel, and especially those of David. No song marks this more simply and more beautifully than the present one.\*

But seldom does the earth experience such a day. As an earthly king, on certain days, holds judgment and exercises authority, surrounded and done homage to by the great men of his kingdoms, so does this rare day of the tempest appear such a solemn day of assembly and judgment of the highest king, where He, receiving the praises of angels as the only Mighty One, from His throne directs and governs the thunder below. But His people upon earth do not merely endure in silent homage this judgment. They at least feel that it is fructifying and blessing in its discharge, and in the management of these fearful masses of storm and water own the mighty Lord of their community, who in the end ever leaves blessing behind Him. Thus this fearful day appears rather as a new day of revelation and glorification of the eternal Jahvé in heaven and upon earth. And the poet now being desirous, under such an apprehension of the meaning of the event, to bring before the mind and immortalize the rare occurrence, from the beginning to the end, as if anew, in the manner in which he has experienced it, and as it now stands before his soul: he projects (I. a. p. 193)† his representation as if in a victorious song, in three members, of ancient style. (1.) In a prelude, vv. 1, 2, he appeals to the angels who stand around the throne of Jahvé, as in the solemn moment before the

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\* How weak, in contrast, is the similar conception in the *Tscherkessen*! (Bodenstedt's 1001 Tag., ii., p. 73 f.)

† *Dichter des A. B.*



opening of a great drama, worthily to render homage to the highest Lord, in the immediately following, still more solemn moment, in which He will reveal Himself as the only Mighty One. (2.) Immediately, without delay, open all the revelations of the Divine Power, like so many majestic commands and victorious operations upon the trembling earth, whilst in heaven at the same time the praise which has been excited on the part of the angels who surround the Divine throne and behold the revelation of Jahvé's might, unbrokenly resounds, vv. 3—9. (3.) Men also from the effect learn anew the true mode of the Divine power and activity, vv. 10, 11. The most detailed of these three parts is, and justly so, the middle one; the description of the tempest, to which vv. 1, 2 are related only as introduction, vv. 10, 11, as consequence. All the sublimity of the storm, its rise, its wide development, its career is here signified in three mutually correspondent strophés (each of five verse-members). As the tempest seems to sink down from the higher heaven, ever more profoundly to the mountains and plains, the poet here paints it in three stages, first in the upper air apparently over the sea of clouds, vv. 3, 4, then suddenly seizing the mountains, vv. 5—7, finally spreading itself out in the plains, vv. 8, 9, thus stirring up and vibrating through everything in the whole land, from the rigid mighty mountains, and their heaven-high cedars, down to the beasts and small trees of the desert and plain, and from the North, where are the high mountain-ranges, down to the lower South. Then the thunder to the feeling of the ancients, is the most important part of the storm, seeming to be the commanding voice, the terrifying exclamation of Jahvé. Hence the poet begins with the thunder, and derives all from it. And the continuous echo of the thunder resounds also in the mind of the poet. In each of the three short strophés the קוֹל יְהוָה *the voice*, or rather the *sound* or *clangour* of Jahvé, must recur several times, at least twice. But it always stands quite forward in the sentence, as if the language permitted the



thunder, ever suddenly falling on the ear, anew to re-echo ; and with this, in manifest design, seven times—3, 2, 2—according to the three strophés. Finally, the whole depicts—both the harsh and fearful, and again the easy and swift skipping movement of the storm, its gradual progress, and at intervals sudden extension, and again sudden feebleness and languor,—with creative power of representation.\*

## 1.

Give to Jahvé, ye sons of God, 1  
     give to Jahvé honour and praise !  
 give to Jahvé the honour of His Name,  
     do homage to Jahvé in holy attire !

## 2.

*Hark Jahvé* is on the waters,  
     the God of glory thundered,  
     Jahvé on many waters ;  
*hark Jahvé* is in strength,  
     *hark Jahvé* is in pomp !  
*Hark Jahvé*, how he breaks cedars, 5  
     where Jahvé so breaks in pieces Lebanon's cedars,  
 and makes them dance like calves,  
     Lebanon and Shirjon like young buffaloes ;  
*hark Jahvé*, how he sprinkles coals of fire !  
*Hark Jahvé* trembles through the desert,  
     Jahvé trembles through the Qadêsh desert ;  
*hark Jahvé* maketh hinds to be in throes  
     and bares of leaves the forests :  
 whilst in His palace—all speak "honour !"

## 3.

Jahvé ruled the great flood : 10  
     so Jahvé rules as everlasting king !

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\* See on the whole further the *Jahrbb. der Bibl. wiss.* viii., pp. 69-73.



opening of a great drama, worthily to render homage to the highest Lord, in the immediately following, still more solemn moment, in which He will reveal Himself as the only Mighty One. (2.) Immediately, without delay, open all the revelations of the Divine Power, like so many majestic commands and victorious operations upon the trembling earth, whilst in heaven at the same time the praise which has been excited on the part of the angels who surround the Divine throne and behold the revelation of Jahvé's might, unbrokenly resounds, vv. 3—9. (3.) Men also from the effect learn anew the true mode of the Divine power and activity, vv. 10, 11. The most detailed of these three parts is, and justly so, the middle one; the description of the tempest, to which vv. 1, 2 are related only as introduction, vv. 10, 11, as consequence. All the sublimity of the storm, its rise, its wide development, its career is here signified in three mutually correspondent strophés (each of five verse-members). As the tempest seems to sink down from the higher heaven, ever more profoundly to the mountains and plains, the poet here paints it in three stages, first in the upper air apparently over the sea of clouds, vv. 3, 4, then suddenly seizing the mountains, vv. 5—7, finally spreading itself out in the plains, vv. 8, 9, thus stirring up and vibrating through everything in the whole land, from the rigid mighty mountains, and their heaven-high cedars, down to the beasts and small trees of the desert and plain, and from the North, where are the high mountain-ranges, down to the lower South. Then the thunder to the feeling of the ancients, is the most important part of the storm, seeming to be the commanding voice, the terrifying exclamation of Jahvé. Hence the poet begins with the thunder, and derives all from it. And the continuous echo of the thunder resounds also in the mind of the poet. In each of the three short strophés the *קול יהוה* the voice, or rather the sound or clangour of Jahvé, must recur several times, at least twice. But it always stands quite forward in the sentence, as if the language permitted the



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     so Jahvé rules as everlasting king !

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\* See on the whole further the *Jahrb. der Bibl. wiss.* viii., pp. 69-73.



Jahvé will give to His people strength,  
 Jahvé will bless His people with salvation !

The **אֱלֹהִים**, ver. 1, cannot be so interpreted, that **אֱלֹהִים** should be supposed absolutely used instead of **אֱלֹהִים** *God*, for this never occurs ; but the plural is in the compound name twice expressed, first in the first member, where it very readily finds place, especially according to the signification of **בָּנִי** ; secondly, again in the second. Elsewhere in similar cases it is expressed either in the first or the second member, § 270c.—All the sentences, vv. 3 ff., are perfectly clear so soon as the **קוֹל** is correctly understood according to § 286 sq. On ver. 3, comp. xviii. 12-14. Here, however, the clouds in heaven are seen suddenly to gather with increasing strength, as the *many waters*, c, beside the simple *a* shows. Ver. 4 depicts the joy in seeing *Him* as a victorious hero, as if in sublime toil.—Ver. 6 must refer to an apparent or actual earthquake (the like are often mentioned in conjunction with violent storms, comp. Matthias of Eclessa, “Armenian Hist.,” p. 288, Dul.) The rigid mountains Lebanon and Anti-Lebanon (Shirjon) skip like young animals leaping up in alarm. The suffix in **וַיִּרְקֹדוּ** must hence refer to the mountains already present to the imagination of the poet, and presently more plainly named. The storm has here reached the highest stage. The thunder seems to divide perpetual flames, since the flashes of lightning appear as serpentine or forked flames, and it is difficult for natural feeling to decide whether they, in quickest succession, depend on the thunder or the reverse. At all events, the divided flame appears to be connected with the broken sound of the thunder and the word.—Ver. 8. Qadêsh opposed to Egypt. How the hinds, terrified thereby, more quickly bring forth, Imrialkais, “Moall.” v. 76. The **הִיָּקַל**, ver. 9, is unquestionably the heavenly, for the poet returns to 1, 2.—Ver. 10. **יֵשֶׁב** as “rule” rightly with brevity connected with — **לְ** as the dative, and **וַיֵּשֶׁב** expresses the consequence or conclusion. **מִבּוֹל** cannot



here be used in the limited sense of the tradition, Gen. vi. 17, but has here its full original signification, as this too alone suits the connexion of the sense of the entire song. Comp. the *Jahrb. der Bibl. Wiss.*, viii., pp. 2, 3.

#### 8. PSALM XIX.

If the preceding Psalm is suggested by the heaven in stormy movement, the present points to the perfectly calm and clear sky, as it usually shines with all its splendour in Palestine. To the view of the senses the glory and order of the restful firmament appears so great, so glittering, unchangeable as eternity, the same in its clearness and manifestness, that the heaven, as one of the Divine works, becomes for every man who is not utterly insensible, the most eloquent witness and most speaking herald of the glory of its Master and Creator in all His works. Thus powerfully does He demand that conclusions be drawn from the seen to the unseen, from particulars to the universal. And the *way in which* this is to be done is further explained in close connexion, in the assurance that the splendour and order of heaven is eternally the same, each day and each night; and therefore this praise and this instruction of heaven abides ever with men, as if they were communicated with and informed from one day to another, from one night to another, in unbroken succession, ver. 3.—This is the underlying thought of the poem, from vv. 2-7. And since the song proceeds from the quite tranquil heaven, and in its contemplation alone the happy soul is lost, this underlying thought comes out in its restful truth with perfect consistency from the first, ver. 2. But now the questions press upon the attention—when, where and how the heaven is this herald of the glory of God. And the progress of the thought answers these questions in the first instance to this effect—that each fresh day and each fresh night are in their constant succession as the traditioners or teachers of this eternal doctrine of heaven. For the heaven announces a very clear word, one perceptible over the whole



earth, concerning God, although it is properly dumb, vv. 4, 5 *a b*. But while the effect of everything is at first only to heighten the enigma, and to strain expectation to the highest degree towards its solution, the latter may now follow the more suddenly and the more clearly. For is there not this marvel in the heaven by day—the ball of the sun, each day uniformly beginning and completing its wide course, as if with new spirit and fresh strength, penetrating all things with its heat? And does not this marvel of the daily sky, as it is here intimated with complete conformity to the most primæval and simplest feelings, vv. 5 *c*-7, indicate most powerfully even to reluctant minds, the Creator,—so that it may be said the heaven praises in this way with sufficient clearness the Divine glory?

Beautiful and full of feeling in conception and execution as these verses are, it is nevertheless impossible that the poet closed the song with them. For what is begun in ver. 3 is absolutely un-completed, and after ver. 7 we miss the description of the way in which the *night*—mentioned in ver. 3 as equally important—teaches the glory of God. If, however, we reflect, and see from Ps. viii. that the night teaches this glory with equal power, although in another way,—we must then say that some of the most beautiful words have been lost after ver. 7. But their sense and colour may, to some extent, be recovered from Ps. viii. 4. The same conclusion is yielded by the structure of the strophés, since a first strophé is manifestly completed from vv. 2-5 in nine verse-members, the second, therefore, vv. 6, 7, is now only half preserved. This ancient song then, has come down to us only as a torso.

We find, indeed, in vv. 8-15, words which yield a plain conclusion, but it is not the less certainly clear that this cannot have been the original conclusion. In the first place, the contents are against this. The law and the religion of Jahvé are here three times most gloriously praised as in themselves pure, correct, faultless, secure, and eternal, and hence also



teaching truth and reviving the soul, vv. 8-11. But the more the poet feels this from his own consciousness, the greater is the anxiety lest he should neglect to fulfil the whole law, and thereby incur the loss of its blessings. Hence the prayer to Jahvé to forgive him his unknown errors ; also to protect him from the dominion of light-minded, impious men, that he may not be led astray by their persuasion or compulsion, vv. 12-15. Thus could men for the first time pray since the seventh and sixth centuries, when the written law was in all particulars more strictly observed ; but the internal parties, through this very circumstance, are more sharply opposed to each other. Again, the less forcible language, the colour of the style, the art of the verse, point to a later age ; for we have, indeed, here also two strophés, each with four verses, but the long-membered verse alone predominates. Then there is no transition at all from the first piece to the second, neither in the thoughts nor in the words. All inward community and relationship is wanting, and the chasm between ver. 7 and ver. 8 is not merely rugged and harsh, but without any bridge, any possible connexion. Yet as the first fragment is without ending, the second is without satisfactory beginning ; for ver. 8 begins too frigidly for a prayer. Hence the conjecture only remains to us, that a later poet fastened this conclusion to the above ancient fragment, in order to place side by side the revelation in Nature and that in Scripture. Either he found the ancient fragment in this state without its original conclusion, or, what is more probable, the old conclusion no longer satisfied him, since in his time the Scriptural revelation had attained high importance, and it seemed to him fitting to touch also upon this.\*

## 1.

The heaven tells God's glory,

2

His handiwork the firmament praiseth,

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\* Comp. on the whole further the *Jahrb. der Bibl. Wiss.*, viii., pp. 73, 77.



Day to day teaches the story,  
 night to night reveals the tidings,  
 without tale, without words,  
 without its voice being heard,  
 5 resounded through the whole earth its noise,  
 and to the boundary of the earth's round, its language,  
 where a tent in it the Sun-man hath.

## 2.

And he steps like a bridegroom from his chamber,  
 bounds like a hero to run his path ;  
 hath from heaven's end his rising,  
 and his circuit unto its ends ;  
 whilst nothing is concealed from its heat.

\* \* \* \*

## 3.

Jahvé's law is perfect, refreshing,  
 Jahvé's revelation is faithful, instructing ignorance ;  
 Jahvé's commands are honest, heart-rejoicing,  
 Jahvé's precept is pure, enlightening the eyes ;  
 10 the fear of Jahvé is pure, eternally abiding ;  
 Jahvé's sentences are truth, righteous together,  
 they, which are more precious than gold and many  
 treasures,  
 and sweet before honey and before honey-comb.

## 4.

Thy servant also feels himself enlightened by them :  
 to keep them brings great reward !  
 Errors who marks ?  
 from unconscious ones, O clear me !—  
 Also from presumption spare Thy servant,—that it  
 dominate me not !  
 then shall I be innocent and free from great iniquity.



15 May my mouth's words be well-pleasing to Thee, and  
 what my heart thinks before Thee,  
 Jahvé, my rock and my redeemer !

הַגִּיד, ver. 2, frequently in poets so, in the best sense "praise."  
 —Ver. 4 might in itself be also thus explained: *no saying* is it  
 (the above mentioned, ver. 3), and *no words whose voice* would  
 be *unheard*; on the contrary, ver. 5, *through the whole earth*  
*their sound has become loud*. But this would give only a some-  
 what feeble observation, and the dance of the two members,  
 ver. 4, would so far cease, as their negations would not  
 correspond. Other instances, comp. § 341 d. This sense  
 indeed might be supposed: *no language* among the tongue of  
 the peoples, and *no speech is there where* (according to § 332 a)  
*its voice is not heard*. But to speak of the different languages  
 of the peoples does not belong to this connexion; and in any  
 case the finest meaning is that where the so significant אָמַר,  
 repeated from ver. 3, receives indeed a quite new reference, in  
 such a way that the thought thereby powerfully advances,—but  
 no new meaning.

The קוֹ אֶצֶר might indeed be understood according to  
 Jer. xxxi. 39, but with this neither קוֹ in this phrase, nor the  
 following מִלֵּיהֶם, nor the entire connexion, would agree.  
 Most of the ancients have here correctly a word like φθόγγος,  
 LXX, ἦχος, Sym.; but the question is, how to find it  
 etymologically. קוֹ is properly "stretch," like τείνω, *tendo*,  
 hence קוֹ, "cord," from drawing firmly together; in Pi.  
 hold on, stay. But equally well is קוֹ transferred to the voice  
 —its *intension*, straining, *tone*, — as τόνος denotes both  
 cord and tone, τωναία, a loud voice; *kawah*, *kawaky*, cry out,  
 Qam. p. 1938. קוֹל is itself remotely related therewith. Comp.  
 also the *Jahrbb. der Bibl. Wiss.*, viii., p. 75. The thrice used  
 suffix ם can refer absolutely to nothing but to the main word  
 הַשְׁמִים, ver. 2, and to this points back also the following םִקָּוָה.  
 For the poet, very pertinently, since he must once introduce



the sun, connects immediately with the mention of it the just-named end of the earth, where the sun or the sun-god, according to the old tradition, slumbers for the night in his bed of rest, in order on the morrow the more freshly and boundingly (for the sun appears actually to leap at his first uprise) to begin his wide course, as if this ever self-refreshing youth stepped out of the darkness of every night, bold and self-conscious as a bridegroom from the dark chamber. Instead of  $\square\dot{\psi}$  (*he placed*, which must refer to God)  $\square\dot{\psi}$  taken relatively suits the connexion better,—*where, i.e.,* on which end of the earth Helios has a tent in them, the heavens; for this tent stands indeed at the end of the earth, but reaches at the same time even into heaven, as the ends of the earth and heaven were generally thought of as meeting and colliding. The *sun* becomes here in quite a new manner a man and hero, because the poetic sense of the figure requires it, § 174 c: so pliant in this ancient way is language in the application of sex, in like manner as among the Indians, who always regard the rain as masculine, while, at least the Vêdic language may also use it as feminine. (comp. A. Weber's *Naxatra*, ii., p. 364 sq., *Indische Studien*, v., pp. 270 sqq.)

Vv. 8-11. A very artistic laudation of the written religion ( $\square\dot{\psi}$ ) of Jahvé; first, according to its inner nature; second, according to its corresponding effects; hence always two different epithets, rightly without copula. Yet only in three strophés or three laudations is the whole completed, the thought being twice renewed, but for the last time, vv. 10-11, extending itself the furthest, and setting apart the description of the effects in a new verse. Each of these three laudations, vv. 8, 9, 10-11, consists again of two smaller propositions, subjects and descriptions. *Eyes enlightening*, ver. 9, might be: cheering him whose eyes would become troubled by grief, xiii. 4; Ezr. ix. 8. It would then correspond to the first clause of this as of the preceding verse. But where the language is of doctrine and laws, *eyes enlightening* is manifestly



understood directly of the spiritual eyes, whereby indeed also here the likeness of the sense in both verses is first completed. The hesitations to which the pious man is subject, as to whether he can keep so high and so recompensing a law, are of a twofold kind; (1) inwardly, the fear of his own errors, ver. 13, which indeed at that time lay the nearer at hand, the more comprehensive was the mass of the commandments of the Pentateuch, now ever more definitely laid down; (2) externally, the fear of presumption, ver. 14. To hold oneself entirely free from the seduction or the compulsion of presumptuous men, of great men inclined to heathenism (פִּשְׁעֵי רַב) was actually at that time not so easy. Hence the later psalmists pray so often (liv. 5, cxli. 4) for strength, perceiving that only in remaining free from this temptation they can avoid great guilt, and that unconscious offences are more readily pardonable than this conscious inclination to heathenism. And this fear increased as the new Jerusalem was actually under the dominion of the Gentiles, comp. Ps. cxxv. 3, and the *Jahrb. der Bibl. Wiss.*, v., p. 168. The words of appeal, ver. 15c, are taken from Ps. xviii. 3, and may prove that the later poet found these songs already in the same series.

#### 9. PSALM VIII.

This short song is most completely pervaded by the tranquil contemplation of nature and of man. Grand indeed are the wonders of the heaven as witnesses of divine operation, and the previous song celebrated them in detail. But at bottom still more wonderful is the creation and the nature of man, low and weak inhabitant of earth as he is, when viewed in contrast to heaven and its creations; yet nevertheless by his participation in the divine spirit on the other hand so highly placed, and so gloriously endowed for the rule of all inferior things, and for the knowledge and praise of God. Thus in man the strongest contrasts meet. But whilst this weak, guilty creature stands in a spiritual relation so immediately near to



God, and is by Him so wondrously exalted, God has glorified Himself in him in the most wondrous manner. Because human beings are on the face of the whole earth, His glory likewise as Lord and Creator is great through the whole earth; and one may say that the true greatness of Jahvé's glory is first shown by the fact that He, whose splendour and might are extended over the heaven, has also so gloriously revealed Himself, upon the whole earth, in every place where men are found and know Him,—in the order and beauty of earthly things, and especially in man himself! This same man may indeed, because he is so highly placed (endowed with spiritual freedom) even misunderstand and abuse the greatness and the goodness of Jahvé, exalting himself against the Divine order, and accusing God of his own aberration and of his own misery (these senseless ones the ancient language terms "wicked enemies of God"). But this is not nature and order; it is degeneration and exception, as is shown by the still undisturbed and pure nature of man, of the child in his uncorrupted inner serenity, his full joyousness,—his unconscious feeling for the right and the true,—whether his inward joy and bliss is first expressed in his babble, or in unrestrained questions and answers. It is here that the deepest oppositions begin. The weakest and most defenceless of all creatures, yet in himself the most blessed, and involuntarily expressing thus his inward happiness! But so must it be if God has thus poured out His whole glory upon man. Ever must in this way the unconscious, involuntary praise of the Creator from the mouth of children be mightier than degenerate lamentations and wild cries to Him. Out of the former pure nature eternally speaks, and she alone can instruct and give content. The renown of Jahvé thus remains at all times and in all places great and exalted.

Such thoughts are expressed by the poet with equal force and brevity. Vv. 2-3 contain at once, with all precision, and hence with all possible brevity, the whole truth. But after a



short pause follows the inward, more exact adducement of proof, vv. 4-9, with which the poet returns to the primary thought of the beginning, ver. 10. But if we follow up the brief suggestion, we find the spiritual view of man,—a flash cast into the darkness of creation; moreover having this advantage over Gen. i. 26, that we here see no narration and tradition concerning the spiritual truth, but the bubbling of it from the first source.

## 1.

Jahvé, our Lord!

2

how exalted is thy glory through all the earth,  
 thou whose splendour is raised above the heaven!

From the mouth of sucklings and children

hast thou founded a defence—because of Thine  
 adversaries,

to silence foe and thirster for revenge!

## 2.

When I behold thy heavens, work of thy fingers,  
 moon and stars, which were formed by Thee:

what is man, that thou rememberest him,

5

son of man, that thou esteemest him,

abasedst him not much before God,

and with splendour and honour crownedst him;

causest him to have dominion over the works of Thy  
 hands,

layedst all at his feet,

small cattle and oxen, all,

even the great beasts of the field,

birds of heaven and fishes of the sea,

that which passes through the paths of the seas!

## 3.

Jahvé, our Lord!

10

how exalted is Thy glory through all the earth!



To understand the תִּנָּה ver. 2 c, we must, above all, not overlook the fact that the poet by this last sentence has to express much the same thing that is further described in ver. 4; for in ver. 4 he intentionally resumes the here subordinate and not completed thought. Moreover, in this verse this much is clear from the context, that the second clause can say nothing further than that the glory or rather the splendour of Jahvé is also extended over heaven. Hence it is best to take the word as תִּנָּה, or as verb in the perf., and descriptive of הַיּוֹדָה, as the LXX have *ἐπ' ἡρθῆ*. תִּנָּה is certainly not found elsewhere, yet we cannot doubt that it signifies "stretch out," "reach," prop. *dehnen* (Ger.), *tend* (*tan* in Indo-Germ.). Comp. תָּנָה, *tanan*, "withdraw," *tana*, "dwell," prop. spread out, *tín*, Aeth., "broad." The *t* is most essential; for even *mad*, *nat*, are related.—Ver. 3. עָן, at the first glance seems, as in xxix. 1, possibly to signify *praise*, as the LXX took it as *αἶνος*,—suitable also here in speaking of a glory and praise as it were firm for eternal ages, immovably founded. So *bany*, *build*, of deeds of glory, *Ham.* p. 296, 4 v. and 419 vl. But, in fact, the mode of expression in this connexion would be too short and incomplete, even heterogeneous and unintelligent. Rather do all the thoughts and figures turn on hostility and war. Against enemies, the more malignant and obstinate they are, one the more needs a firm defence, and just such an one has God Himself founded, in opposition to his enemies, out of the weak mouth of children! What contrast! Yonder the wild, insolent, destruction-loving foe,—here the weakest creature, and yet his merry babbling mouth provides a defence of the Creator against all the calumnies of that foe! One feels that here, too, a warrior speaks in the language of his craft.—But, again, in vv. 5, 6, the language, if more flowing, yet condenses an uncommon amount of thought into the shortest space. God ever remembers man, and searches him out, because the latter can never get free from the thought of Him, according to the inex-



haustible mystery of the connexion between the human and Divine spirit as it subsists since the creation. What a wonder, then, that this weak human being is thereby, notwithstanding his weakness, in every moment so near to God Himself, and God to Him! that God has thus subjected him to Himself, but placed him as a ruler over all other living things! Thus does the affectionate man ever think of his friend, ever seeks him, asks for him, and never merely leaves him to himself! And thus the poet comes from this nature, the nearest and most certain of all, ver. 5, to the more remote, the primæval nature of man, which is always the same, vv. 6-9. —Ver. 6 is thus merely a continuation of ver. 5. as similarly Job vii. 17, 18.—That the sun is wanting, ver. 4, is not because the poet must have composed in the night; but since the representation of the day and of the daily heaven is the nearest, the second clause only recurs to that of the mighty heaven, whose splendour certainly is quite peculiarly pertinent in this place. Similarly, Job xxv. 5.

There follow now the songs from the time of the great wars of David against the allied heathen peoples. And here we may most suitably explain in the first place:

#### 10. PSALM CX.,

a song, spoken to a king, in all respects like a Divine utterance (oracle), as he, certainly after sacrifice and prayer in the temple (comp. below, Pss. xx., xxi.), was about to set out for war against mighty foes.\*

Since also the language of the short song is not opposed to it, we may certainly regard David as the king referred to, for king and kingdom here appear in the highest degree of nobility and glory. As the kingdom was glorified under

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\* The literal application of the superscription being presupposed, the song would be David's, and he would thus address another in it. The conclusion would in this case be valid which is drawn in Matt. xxii. 41, 42. But I have already spoken further on this matter in my work on *The Three First Gospels*.



David, experience showed how a human king may agree and be compatible with the heavenly, an external state with the theocracy, in the fairest way. There existed no contention between temporal and spiritual rule, and the king was at the same time priest, 2 Sam. vi., 1 Kings viii., comp. Zach. vi. 13. The primæval unity of royalty and priesthood, as the story relates it, with reference to Melchizédeq, Gen. xiv. 18-24, appeared again restored in the greater national family. But if the king stands on this high stage, the higher priestly sanctity and inviolability is also bound up with his person. And thus the present oracle promises, advancing to higher things, that the king, led by Jahvé, will with the greater power have victory over his enemies, and the more securely obtain higher strength even in the time of need; inasmuch as he, according to Jahvé's will, is and shall remain consecrated priestly king. He shall stand therefore higher and nearer to Jahvé than ordinary kings, and none may do him causeless injury without at the same time having to fear Jahvé's anger. The two primary thoughts come out with genuine prophetic brevity and sharpness,—first, how Jahvé promises to lead this king to battle, and at his side to overcome his foes, ver. 1; and then how it must be so, because Jahvé has destined him for ever to be the holy priest-king, as is said in the beginning of a second strophé, ver. 4, manifestly as the mere echo of a more ancient Divine oracle.\* After each of these two sayings there follows, in more tranquil language,—the poet rather than the prophet coming forward,—the application and illustration of the thought, the encouragement of the king, and the depiction of the manner in which such a divine strength is preserved in the heat of battle from the beginning to the end, as the poet's sacred fancy beholds it,—in a few grand, briefly-sketched

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\* We must not overlook the point that the words, ver. 4, do not, as those in ver. 1, give an entirely new oracle, but only point back to an earlier, as to one ever standing entirely firm. By this too the period of this song is more exactly defined.



pictures, vv. 2-3, 5-6 ; until, in a weaker resonance to the oracle, fancy at last, ver. 7, glances at the extreme end of the conflict, and,—even in the following pursuit of the flying foe,—the unwearied strength and fresh vigour of the king, ever capable of new exploits.

In spite of the seeming want of connexion of the propositions, a higher unity nevertheless is diffused over the whole. And along with genuine lyric brevity and compression, there is no confusion of the thoughts and images. The oracle serves generally rather merely to indicate than to follow out details. Here it is indeed clothed,—in the age of the greatest lyric poet of Israel, and as if after his example,—in the guise of a song, but maintains the fugitive brevity proper to it, and the mere pictorial suggestiveness. Thus there come into relief at the head of each of the two small strophés (of three verses and seven clauses) the purest contents of the oracle, and with full power. After this very powerful beginning the language in each seems to subside, with figures further suggestive of the whole subject. Whilst the flight of prophetic vision overlooks the whole course of the conflict and victory of the king in its particular stages, it goes forward, ver. 5, precisely from the point where the representation at the end of the first strophé, ver. 3, came to a pause ; adding in a last up-spring, ver. 7, a new image from the farthest distance.

## 1.

To my lord speaks Jahvé: "Set thee at my right hand, 1  
till I lay the foes as a stool for thy feet."—

The staff of might will Jahvé send thee out of Sion :  
rule in the midst of thy foes !

Thy people is willing for sacrifice on thy muster-day ;  
in holy attire, out of the morning's bosom,  
thou hast the dew of thy youth !

## 2.

Sworn hath Jahvé, and will not rue it :



“thou art for ever priest,  
after the manner of Melchisédeq!”—

5 The Lord at thy right hand  
dashes in pieces kings on the day of His wrath;  
will judge among the heathen—full of corpses is it,—  
dashes in pieces the head upon the wide land.

## 3.

From the brook by the way will he drink:  
therefore lift up his head.

Ver. 1. The figure is throughout consistent. Not the king alone, without Jahvé, is to march to battle, but Jahvé will march for and with him. Jahvé accordingly requires him to sit at His right hand, until the foes give way before the victorious chariot. Comp. Judges v. 13, 23; Ps. xliv. 10; 2 Sam. v. 24. This indeed is said as a deduction from the general truth that the true king is a *σύνθρονος θεοῦ*. But it would be perverse to mistake the closer application and the complete picture in this place. Ver. 2. *The sceptre of thy power*, the sceptre by which thou canst mightily fight and conquer, will (if perhaps in the midst of the stir, thou thinkest thou hast it not) Jahvé will send thee out of Sion. The Divine warranty shall not fail thee. So, with naught but courage in thy heart, *shalt thou then rule* (§ 347 a). Thus the poet, in more quiet illustration of the thought, drops the first figure from ver. 1; for bodily Jahvé does not march out from the holy place, especially since the ark of the covenant was no longer carried out of Sion into war. But at the new beginning, ver. 5, the first figure recurs. Ver. 3 now further explains how much devolves upon the people, if what is expressed in ver. 2 is to be fulfilled. As the dew in countless drops appears from the bosom of the early morning, so will thy young men on the morning of battle come to meet thee suddenly in countless brave bands (2 Sam. xvii. 12; Mich. v. 6). Thou needest not to be anxious whether they will be there, and whether in



full numbers. And as the fresh dew revives all that it touches, so will thy young men, holily attired (Isa. xiii. 3) for the holy war, meet thee, reviving thy courage. Both figures, which find their connexion in the notion of the dew, are thus immediately united with wondrous brevity. But most brief of all and most pointed is here the first word *thy people is willing for sacrifice* (§ 296 *b*), is itself like a number of free-will offerings,—offering themselves of their own accord on the day of battle like a sacrifice to God, in order to further the Divine work. The notion of the sacrifice already coming in with נִדְּבֹת, the language passes quickly, with the more ease, into the figure of the sacrificial attire. Ver. 4. *Thou* king, thou who wert long leader of armies and king, thou *art* from this moment forward *priest*, just as the king Melchizédeq was at the same time priest. The solemn transference of the priestly dignity to one who, as is self-obvious, was already king, is accordingly here the new element. Vv. 5, 6. The poet now returns,—according to this second prophetic saying, whence it still more follows how mightily Jahvé will support this king,—in a somewhat different way repeating the figure of the right hand, ver. 1,—immediately to the illustration of particulars. And since in vv. 2, 3, the mere power which will serve the king was rather designated, so, on the other hand, he here sketches pictures of the issue,—of the battle and the complete victory. The fancy of the poet contemplates a wide field of battle, full of corpses, the victory therefore gained, whilst Jahvé as if invisible at his side, beats down, in the capacity of judge, the heads of the allied kings. But first the hasty pursuit of the defeated crowns the victory; and often the victor wearies on the last way, losing all fruits of his exertion. But this king will never weary and fail; and should he, pursuing the flying foe, be on the point of fainting in the heat and haste of the conflict, he will find in the morning a brook, as if bubbling for his sake, to give him refreshing drink (comp. an example in 2 Sam. xxiii. 15 and sqq.), and so strengthened,



pursue his way with undiminished courage. Hence the subject matter itself shows that in ver. 7, along with the new thought and figure, the king appears as a new subject; and now, in the wane of the song, he is only spoken of in the third person.

In this manner, not seldom does a single short sentence re-sound, following upon an oracle, whilst the glance, as if now weary, once more kindles into life towards the distant view (comp. *Jahrbb. der Bibl. Wiss.*, viii., p. 36 sq.). Only thus is the transition in this sentence, ver. 7, from the second to the third person explained. Compare for many other instances, the *Jahrbb. der Bibl. Wiss.*, xi., p. 212 f., and *Gött. Gel. Anz.*, 1862, pp. 768-772. Should any one, because of the *for ever*, ver. 4, mistake the whole sense of the poet, let him consider that the expression indicates nothing but a time undefined—in the sense of every time of the speaker; therefore a time the end of which the poet of that time neither sees nor wishes for. Especially the rule of a good king is always desired as eternal, comp. xxi. 5; xlv. 3, 7; lxi. 7; 1 Kings, i. 31; Prov. xxix. 14; Ps. xli. 13.

One of David's own songs from the midst of the deepest dangers of this most bitter war, is certainly preserved in

## 11. PSALM LX.

Not indeed in the form in which this song at present appears. It will presently be further shown, that in its present form it finds its place amongst the latest. But in the midst of it, the words, ver. 8, to זִנְהָרְנוּ, ver. 12, are proved, on closer investigation, to be quite foreign to the later poet, and here introduced by him out of an old song of David himself, because their contents seemed to him very well to suit his song. Since we have thus here nothing but a large fragment of a Davidic song, it is somewhat more difficult to ascertain its occasion and its contents. Yet plainly the peculiar kernel of it has been saved, and by this we are left in no doubt as to the emergency in which David was at the time. The possession of the entire holy land



was at that time more precarious than ever. All the foes surrounding its borders thought to be able soon to conquer it, and already spoke of dividing it among themselves. According to ver. 11, even the subject Edom in the far south had risen against David, whilst he in the far north lay in the open field in arms against the Aramæans. Under these circumstances, he cried from the depth to God. The earth seemed to him to lie in ruins, and it seemed to him doubtful how he could despatch even an army only into Edom, in this unexpected revolt. But a favourable oracle, which he had received in answer to his inquiry in the camp, determines him as speedily to the highest joy in God, and turning to his firm, rock-like confidence in God, ever habitual to him, he sings this song, the principal part of which was probably the free communication of the priestly oracle, vv. 8-10, with a few short preliminary and appended words, as they may be in some sort imagined in David's style, in conformity with Pss. iii. and iv. Of this epilogue, the words, ver. 11 to the beginning of ver. 12, have been retained. It is more difficult to decide, whether some words from the prelude, at all events here and there, came to be inserted in the present first strophé, vv. 3-7.

Further, the correct view of the above ancient fragments of the present song, and especially of their historical importance, receives a further support in the superscription preserved in vv. 1, 2; in so far, that is, as the latter in two of its portions (p. 54 sq., I. p. 234) refers to the earliest period of the collection of Davidic songs. It is further shown, in the *Gesch. des V. Isr.*, how completely this historical occasion, still indicated by it, is consistent with actual history, and how certain it is, that it must have been written at a very early date.

## 1.

O God, thou hast rejected us, broken through us,      3  
been wrath : O restore us again !



Thou hast shaken the earth, cleft it ;  
 heal its breaches, for it totters !  
 5 Hast caused Thy people to behold hard things,  
 hast made us drunk with wine of reeling,  
 given to Thy fearers a banner,  
 that it may be unfurled before the bow :  
 that Thy beloved may be set free,  
 help, strong right hand, and listen to us !

## 2.

God spake in His sanctuary, causes me to rejoice :  
 " I will divide Sichem,  
 and measure out Sukkot's vale ;  
 mine is Gilead and mine Manasse,  
 and Efraïm is the protection of my head,  
 Juda my ruler's staff ;  
 Moab—my wash-pot is it,  
 10 upon Edom cast I my shoe ;  
 because of me, cry out, Peléschet !"

## 3.

Who will lead me hence to the strong city ?  
 who conducts me hence to Edóm ?  
 wilt not Thou, O God, Who hast rejected us,  
 and goest not forth, O God, in our armies ?  
 give us help from our oppressors,  
 since vain is the help of men !  
 through God we shall gain the victory,  
 and He will thrust down our oppressors !

The first main division, vv. 3-7, contains three times both complaint and prayer, corresponding to one another. In accordance with this and with lxxxv. 15, lxxx. 4, the תשובב in ver. 3 is to be taken. The mediate connexion with ? has come in owing to the figurative remoter signification of the verb. Ver. 4, in accordance with Isa. i. 5, 6. Ver. 6 says, in



the play on words: Thou hast indeed given to those who fear Thee a *banner* because they took the field on behalf of the true religion, but only to *ban* them [or *flag*, that they may *flag*]—properly, that they may make their escape—before the bow, not to conquer thereby, but to be conquered. קֶשֶׁט is a corrupt later reading for קֶשֶׁת, *bow*, *keshet*, Syr.; the Massoretes seem, indeed, by the expression קֶשֶׁט and by the accentuation to follow quite another explanation (to rise for the cause of truth, from נֶס, not from נוֹס) but opposed to the connexion. On יִמִּינֶךָ ver. 7, which is here translated with freedom only, comp. § 281 c. In *His sanctuary*, ver. 8, because the ark of the covenant was carried with the host into the field. But in adding, *causes me to rejoice*, he thereby also sufficiently indicates that he had not himself received this oracle. If Jahvé wills to divide Sikhem and Sukkot (as ancient holy cities on this and that side of the Jordan, Gen. xlviii. 22, xxxiii. 17, mentioned instead of the whole of Canaan), no one hostile to himself can divide it, and therefore, *e.g.*, not the Aramæans or the Philistines who now aim at conquering it and dividing it amongst themselves. On the contrary, He retains as arms and attire, of which he boasts as warrior-hero, the strength of Israel, the tribes of Gilead and Manasse,—as helmet the ancient, venerable leading tribe (as it were, head-tribe) of Efraïm, the tribe still at this time so serviceable for strong defence,—and as sceptre, finally, Juda, the royal tribe (Gen. xlix. 10); Moab and Edom too are in the vicinity, serving Him as useful tools; but Moab is, by the side of the above tribes, only as the wash-basin (in opposition to the crown, an inferior, contemptible utensil, comp. Wilken, *Hist. Gaznevidarum*, or *Chr. Pers.*, p. 142, 7), in which the king, resting from the toils of the day, washes\* (in blood?), and Edom as the ground whereon He at the same time casts His shoe, that He may rest. But the country on

\* Still more exactly is this figure, apparently so strong and yet, according to the royal custom of the time, very familiar, elucidated in the *Gesch. des V. Isr.*, iii., p. 386, 3rd edit. Comp. the *Jahrb.*, v., p. 172.



which one freely casts one's shoe and there leaves it, one takes possession of as a subject and servile land, the shoe being the sign of the standing of this person over the land, and so of its possession by him. Comp. Ruth iv. 7. *Founding of the City of Pataliputra*, edited by H. Brockhaus (Leipsic, 1835), pp. 1 sqq. Moab and Edom being thus subject, will Philistia (of which David, from the far North where he now stands, rightly thinks in the last instance) rise? On the contrary, *because of me*, because of my victory and my energy, *cry aloud*, bewail *Philistia!* thou wilt soon know me as a conqueror, Isa. xv. 4. The *reflexive* would then be used, merely because Philistia comprehends all the individual Philistines, and התרווע could not express a voluntary jubilation in this place, as in lxv. 14, but the sense would be: already subject, Moab and Edom will be unable to rejoice, how much less Philistia! Meanwhile, the earliest reader whom we know has understood the התרווע as θριαμβεύειν as if this had been its ordinary meaning (as θρίαμβος, *triumphus*, Vol. I. p. 230 takes its name from the cry of victory), but has somewhat altered the reading: *over Philistia I rejoice* as subject to me, Ps. cviii. 10; and if we point הַתְּרוּעָה, this might perhaps mean *over Philistia is my triumph!* (§ 156 a). But this would ill suit the tenor of the language in the two previous verse-members. Rather does that stronger sense form only the just transition from *b* to *c*. The "let me rejoice!" ver. 8, belongs in any case not to the oracle itself, wherein it would be otiose, possibly inconvenient, but expresses provisionally the joy of the poet at so joyous an oracle. For the ancient poet proceeds immediately, in accord with the oracle, in the *sing.*, ver. 11: *who will lead me to a strong city?* (מְצִיר is well explained by מְבַצֵּר Ps. cviii. 11). The reason is that David had at that time to encamp in the open field, and in this camp much was to be feared. Further, who *leads me* (comp. on the *perf.* on xi. 3) *unto the distant Edom*, which has just revolted, to chastise it? Wilt not Thou, Thou who, according to such an oracle, wilt again give me victory? But



from ver. 12, the later re-touching again occurs, which may be recognized in the whole song by the fact that in it the first person plural is used, whilst the ancient poet spoke of himself only in the singular. Instead of David, the whole of Israel now speaks and supplicates.

The great victor song which David sung after obtaining a complete victory over all the allied heathen peoples is certainly

#### 12. PSALM XVIII.

For this is a grand, a splendid song of victory, which contains no momentary brief effusions of the mood of joy. It is composed with great art, in lofty, calm, and clear copious details throughout, and certainly with a view to some special occasion of festivity. In this way may be also explained the tenor of the song, which is general, the poet rejoicing not so much over a particular deliverance just experienced, as over a multitude of various dangers and hostilities out of which he has emerged, as from the highest and last stage of a life in many ways disturbed and troubled, yet never cast down, ever renewing its struggle. He praises Jahvé as his mighty and faithful and gracious Deliverer, who has subjected to him all his enemies, near and afar off, who has raised him, His faithful beloved one, to the head of the peoples, and will also further eternally bless his race. The whole song discloses the exalted love which is tried by temptation and sufferings, whereby the poet has ever clung to Jahvé, and in the power of which he overcame all hostility, and now is conscious, in a more advanced age, of strength and might for evermore; but, more closely considered, it is, moreover, a very definite epoch in the life of David, in which alone he could speak and sing as he here does. This epoch may be conjectured from the fact that we have here a grand song of victory in which there is no reference to domestic foes (after civil wars there should never be triumph, at least David was sufficiently great and noble never to indulge in this), but only over foreign, *i.e.*, heathen enemies,



vv. 32-46. But along with the lofty representation of his most recent deliverance, with which the song, after the general introduction, begins, vv. 5-19, David simply sketches a single comprehensive picture of all the manifold deepest dangers which he had passed through during the last great year of war, in this most violent struggle with all heathen peoples, and in the midst of which he seemed to the world and even to himself a ruined man.

The song of victory begins only with the calmest reflection, whilst the flow of the language gradually rises, and frequently, in further explanation, again mildly subsides. In the solemn introduction, vv. 2-7, slowly and gradually rising to a height, at the conclusion, vv. 47-51, with loftier calm and certainty, the leading thought comes out in purity and brevity. In the middle, vv. 5-46, it is pursued and confirmed, being completed in three grand strophés; for while the poet would celebrate *how* he was delivered by Jahvé's grace there passes immediately before his mind, in historic review, all the greatness and fearfulness of the most recent danger from which he now, with joy and pride, sees himself delivered. The greater the danger the more wondrous the deliverance, the loftier the reminiscence and depiction of the Divine salvation. If the poet was a king of the community of the true religion actually worthy of the highest Divine favour, and there hinged upon his life and his preservation a portion of the history of the kingdom of God upon earth,—the power of the whole earth and the threatening of death could avail naught against him; yea, it must appear as if Jahvé, in anger at the opposition of the world, had come from heaven in storm and tempest to draw him with irresistible power as from the gates of the deep hell; and so the language here rises quickly to an extremely vivid picture of extreme danger and of signal deliverance, through the appearance of Divine judgment, vv. 5-20. Yet the inner truth of this particular history lies in the suggestion that such deliverance and glorification of the man by Jahvé became possible



only through the fulfilment in this particular matter of the eternal laws of the living covenant of a man with the only true God. The ever faithful and pure man can alone experience it, only the true spiritual God (of Israel) can give it. Accordingly, the poet now brings out, on the one side, the human relation, and exhibits the pure and holy life of his mind with childlike openness, and with the consciousness that man generally can obtain salvation in no other way; with this the language falls into calmest, most measured description, vv. 21-31. On the other side, the poet feels that the true spiritual God can only give salvation to the man so united with Him, and so at last the song again gradually rises higher, representing Jahvé as One who alone gives strength and true victory, who also could alone exalt so highly and strengthen the poet, vv. 32-46. For God, in the true Theocracy in which the poet had the blessing to be born, is known more clearly, and therefore also more mightily and more inspiringly than outside its pale. In this manner the song then of itself returns to the full thanksgiving with which it began. Thus the three middle great divisions, which form the proper substance of the song, are connected with one another and with the brief introduction and conclusion, easily and with gentle transitions. The entire development of the leading thought cannot be completed in all its members, and up to its true climax, more clearly and nobly than is done in this sublimest artistic song of victory.

But this long song is pervaded still further by art, which symmetrically distributes its contents into three great divisions. The prevailing measure of a strophé in it is a series of five verses. The first and the third of the three main divisions is thus each distributed into three strophés, the middle one into two; but the last strophé of each of these three main divisions is enlarged to six verses. To these eight (3, 2, 3) strophés one similar is added at the beginning as prelude, and one at the end as an epilogue, and thus the whole song consists of exactly ten similar strophés. So far the art of the whole may



be completely recovered from the resources at hand. We cannot, however, recognize a perfect similarity of the verse-members within such strophé, by the use of these expedients. Long verse-members are nowhere seen.

The superscription, "David sang this song to Jahvé when He had delivered him out of the power of all his enemies, and out of the hand of Saul," fixes indeed the occasion of the song in too general a manner. We may not overlook the fact that Saul is here named only as the most dangerous, not as the last foe. But even thus the original reference of the song would be too far extended, and in words like vv. 18, 49, an allusion to Saul would in vain be sought. The great and detailed picture which the poet sketches of his deliverance, vv. 5—21, need not be taken too narrowly of a particular case. It is too large and too comprehensive for this. Rather does the reminiscence of all dangers and deliverances of the last year collect itself in the poet's mind in order here to serve for this one Divine picture. Yet this description at the beginning of the long song is very different from the words vv. 32—49, where the poet quite leaves that picture, and more freely looks back upon the whole of his past life. But in this the superscription contains a sound recollection of David's authorship. In fact, not the least difficulty appears in deriving the song from David, who has moreover, in ver. 51, an appropriate place, named himself, in the thorough simplicity of ancient feeling. The character of David, his habit of mind, and his lofty consciousness, his experiences, unique as they were in all the world, are here all finally expressed with clearness. That the poet was a king, exalted by his peculiar capacity under Jahvé's help, to be the head of the peoples, is not merely plain from ver. 51, but already from ver. 44. But no later king could boast of such things. Even the fact that at the end the poet names himself in noble pride, and in full consciousness anticipates the continuance of the Divine blessing even to late posterity, speaks for David as the poet; for the last words of



David show the same high confidence, 2 Sam. xxiii., comp. vii. 19. The details are indeed strikingly prolonged, and here and there the language appears to be too languid and attenuated. But the song probably belongs to the later age of David, when the fire of lyric poetry has now a milder gleam; and in this case it would be a song of the highest calm and of the most blessed peace, in which the description of its own accord falls into greater copiousness of details. On the other hand, the language in other places acquires boldness and elevation, and hardly is there elsewhere so grand an execution of truly poetic pictures as is found here, vv. 5—21. The individual words have a quite Davidic stamp.

To all this may be added as a very weighty external testimony to the high antiquity and the Davidic origin of this song, its recurrence in 2 Sam. xxii., with the same historical superscription. For (1) all the other songs which are inserted in the Books of Samuel as springing from David, are certainly genuine Davidic songs. Therefore, on this account, the probability is in favour of this song also having been known, according to safe tradition, as Davidic to the comparatively ancient composer of these books. (2.) The comparison of the diverse readings of the song in the two books leads to important inferences. The copy in the Psalms is certainly later; this may be concluded, apart from the history of the literature of the two books, from the much greater number of vocal letters, see vv. 5, 6, 19, 47; 6, 16, 31, 35, 38, 48; 23; on the other hand, vv. 14, 30. Notwithstanding this, the copy in the Psalms must have proceeded not from Samuel, but from another very good and ancient source; because the song in many important passages recalls it, more faithfully, more originally, with less corruption than the very fugitive copy in Samuel, for the most part erroneously defective, but which sometimes makes spurious additions, frequently obliterates what is more ancient. Comp. especially vv. 2, 11, 13, 14, 23, 24, 33, 34, 36, 38, 39, 42, 46, 47. In some other passages the text in Samuel is



more faithfully preserved, see especially vv. 3, 5, 8, 16, 41, 43, 44, 45. Since now the good and original text is so strongly divided between the two, both must in different ways and at different times have been borrowed from a more ancient source. Or rather, the original copy had very early broken up into a mass of derived ones, and in these, through the freedom of the oldest copyists, had become more and more various, until at length one copy of these was adopted in Samuel, another later in the Psalm.\* It further follows from this, that the song which early underwent such variation must be very old, and as one much known and read, must have been much copied. Both considerations point to a Davidic origin.

## 1.

2 Dearly beloved I hold thee, O Jahvé my strength !  
 Jahvé, Thou my rock and my battlement,  
     my Deliverer Thou and my Redeemer ;  
 Thou my God and rock on whom I trust,  
     shield and horn of my salvation ;  
 my fortress and refuge, Thou my helper,  
     Thou who succourest me from hurt !  
 worthy of praise, I cry, is Jahvé,  
     and from my foes I become free.

## 2.

5 Waves had surrounded me,  
     streams of destruction affrighted me ;  
 bands of hell had surrounded me,  
     death's nets fallen upon me :—  
 in my affliction I cry to Jahvé,  
     complain aloud to my God ;

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\* The older view, that the deviations in the Psalms and Samuel proceeded from the hand of the poet, is not more erroneous than that of Gramberg (in Winer's *Exeget. Stud.* I, pp. 1-25) that the "recension" in the Psalms is more ancient and genuine, and that that in Samuel is borrowed from it; which I confuted in *Jen. Lit. Zeit.*, 1829, *Erl. Bl.*, and later C. v. Lengerke, in his *Comm. crit. de duplici Ps. xviii. exemplo.* Regim. 1833.



He from His palace hears me cry,  
my complaint pierces his ears ;  
and the earth trembles and totters,  
and heaven's pillars shake,  
wavered—because He glowed !  
there went up smoke in his nostrils,  
fire devoured out of his mouth,  
coals were kindled from Him.

## 3.

And the heaven He bowed, came down, 10  
—cloudy darkness under his feet ;—  
advanced on the cherub and flew,  
took flight on the wings of the wind ;  
makes the darkness his screen,  
round about him in his pavilion ;  
—darkest waters, thickest clouds !  
Before the brightness in front of Him,—passed away  
his dark clouds :  
—hail and coals of fire !  
and from heaven thunders Jahvé,  
and the Highest sounds aloud ;  
—hail and coals of fire !

## 4.

He sent His arrows and—scatters them, 15  
slinging lightnings, and—scares them.  
Then appeared they, the beds of the sea,  
and the earth's foundations were bare :  
—before Thy threatening, Jahvé,  
before the blast of the wind of Thy nostrils !  
reaching forth from the height He takes me,  
draws me out of many waters ;  
sets me free from my cruel enemy,  
my haters, since they were too strong for me.



They indeed fall upon me on the day of my distress ;  
 yet Jahvé did become my support,  
 20 led me out into the open,  
 sets me free—because He loves me.

## 5.

Jahvé doeth to me according to my righteousness,  
 according to the purity of my hands He rewards me.  
 For I kept Jahvé's ways,  
 departed not wickedly from my God :  
 for before me stand all His judgments,  
 His commandment I removed not from me ;  
 so also was I honest towards Him,  
 kept myself from my iniquity ;  
 and so Jahvé rewarded me according to my righteous-  
 ness,  
 25 according to the purity of my hands, clear before  
 Him.

## 6.

Towards good men Thou showest Thyself good,  
 upright towards the upright man ;  
 towards pure men Thou showest Thyself pure,  
 towards the perverted as perverse.  
 But *Thou* doest help afflicted people,  
 and abasest proud eyes ;  
 but *Thou* causest my light to shine  
 —Jahvé, my God, enlightens my darkness !  
 30 For through Thee I shatter hosts,  
 and through my God I overleap walls ;  
 that God whose way is upright,  
 Jahvé's word is refined,  
 a shield is He to all who trust in Him !

## 7.

For who is God but Jahvé,  
 who a rock except our God ?



that God, who has girded me with strength,  
caused me to bound on my way unharmed,  
Who made my feet like hinds' feet,  
and causeth me to stand upon my heights;  
Who hath inured my hands to war, 35  
that my arms bend the iron bow,  
Thou who gavest me the shield of Thy salvation,  
Thy right hand sustains me,  
Thy humility exalts me!

## 8.

Thou makest wide my steps under me,  
and my ankle-bones do not tremble;  
I pursue and overtake my enemies,  
return not until they are destroyed,  
and crushed that they cannot stand,  
fall under my feet!—  
Thus Thou girdest me with strength for the war, 40  
bendest my adversaries under me;  
turnest to me the backs of my foes,  
my haters—I bring them to naught.

## 9.

Though they cry—without deliverer,  
unto Jahvé—He listened not to them;  
that I may grind them like dust of the earth,  
tread them as dirt of the streets!—  
Thou rescuest me from the people's broils,  
preservest me to be the head of the nations,  
people, unknown, serve me;  
at the hearing of the ear they obey me, 45  
sons also of the strange land do me homage.  
The sons of the strange land vanish away,  
Tremble in affright from out of their castles.



## 10.

Live Jahvé, be my rock blessed,  
 and exalted the God of my salvation !  
 that God, who gave me vengeance  
 and subjected nations to me;  
 Thou who savest me from my foes,  
 yea, exaltest me in the presence of mine adversaries,  
 freest me from the man of violence !—  
 Therefore praise I Thee, Jahvé, among the nations,  
 make music to Thy Name !  
 50 to Him, to the lofty Helper of His king,  
 to Him, who shows favour to His Anointed,  
 to David and His seed for ever !

1. Vv. 2-4, the sublime introduction, itself at the outset a full, ardent ascription of praise to Jahvé. I love Thee, my mighty protector in power and deed, who fitly, as even now, called upon in the presence of my enemies, ever does and did help me. To this entirely restful beginning ver. 2 is so peculiarly appropriate that we cannot see why it should be wanting in Samuel, except through a copyist's mistake. רַחֵם is, besides, a rare word ; and the omission was easier than the addition. On the other hand, ver. 3 has certainly been preserved in its entirety in Samuel ; for the מִשְׁגְּבִי stands in the Psalm quite abruptly and confusedly, so that it must have been considered spurious, or the mere remainder of an originally longer series of words : but Sam. gives the fully appropriate supplement. Instead of לִי which in Ps. cxliv. 2, and Sam. stands after מִפְּלִטִי, a preferable reading is וְגִוְּפִי, as the poet of Ps. xix. 15 must have had it before his eyes. In this way there is formed an appropriate division ; the praise of Jahvé, here unfolding itself in the right place, is resolved into three larger members, and each again into two halves, of which the earlier depicts the strength of Jahvé which awakens confidence,—the second the application, or the



actual end and consequence, the deliverance. Each small and large member is thus completed, and the whole in a perfectly satisfactory manner. The סִמְחָה here at the beginning, well coincides with the conclusion, ver. 49.

2. Vv. 5-21. The utterly lost and unhappy one thinks of himself as if cast down a deep precipice, or as sinking irredeemably in deep water floods, comp. xxxi. 2; xxxii. 6; xl. 3; lxix. 2, 3. He who now knows himself to be near to death, may suppose himself to have been cast into the deepest bottom of the sea, to the point where the lower world begins, as if he were already in the smoking streams which lead to the lower world (Jon. ii. 4, 6, 7; Job, xxvi. 5, 6) or according to another rarer figure, as if he were already in the nets of death that ever waylays mankind. (Hence the Indian mythology represents Jamas with a rope, comp. *Savitri-Upâkhjânam* v. 8, and the German *sage* tells of Hell's fetters which wind around the neck of the dying; comp. also *Hamâsa*, p. 111, 8 v., and G. Müller's *Amerikanische Urreligion* p. 98). But though the faithful one lie on the very verge of hell, it is never too hard nor too far off to move him, if it please God. Even the depths of the sea and the gates of the lower world must feel Jahvé's power, and stand open to His word (Job. xxvi. 5, 6). Hence the beautiful representation—how whilst the prayer of the poet throbs from the lowest depths to the listening Jahvé in the highest heaven, suddenly from the utmost height to the extremest depth through the whole resistant world the delivering word of Jahvé hastens, and Jahvé as with mighty hand draws the faithful one up out of death. But always with this another figure is blended. If the poet lay then below as on the verge of death, it was peculiarly the hostile world, it was (as presently in vv. 18 sqq. is more calmly stated) his cruel enemies who had brought him thither. But if the wrong was on their side, the Divine anger must be enkindled against them; and if their rage against him was so violent, a Divine anger must be kindled, which as if burning above in the



secrecy of the remotest heaven, came over the earth like a thunder-storm, and overcoming all resistance of the world, became like a tempest laying bare the foundation of the sea, in order again to draw forth and to deliver from the extreme depth him that lay there as one lost. But nothing shows so vividly, and with such fearful power of impression the connexion of the heaven and the earth,—as Jahvé like one in wrath, bows the heaven over the earth,—and the earth even to the lower world trembles before His word,—than the Palestinian storm, as it is occasionally seen, uniting the tempest and the earthquake; Ps. xxix. Pictures of such manifestations of Divine activity in great moments of the earth are indeed not rare elsewhere (lxviii. 9; Judges v. 4; Am. ix. 5; Mic. i. 3; Hab. iii). But nowhere is the figure so fully carried out as here. From the beginning to the end the figure is retained, in three great divisions. First of all, there appears, with the rising and kindling of the Divine anger, a distant quaking and bluster, while amidst storm and trembling on the earth, a glowing thunder-cloud forms in the higher heaven, already announcing itself by distant flashes, as it were the bursting fire of anger no longer to be restrained, vv. 7-9. Then the violent hurricane, as in a rapid storm, comes ever nearer, it soon stands like a black mass of cloud, in threatening aspect over the earth; and Jahvé seems, bowing the heaven, in this dark guise to be drawing fearfully near, vv. 10-12,—until out of the heavy black clouds riven by His word, as by a bright flash, lightnings, thunder and hail burst forth unceasingly,—Divine weapons, by which He scares all resistance, and divides the flood which kept the faithful imprisoned, vv. 13-15. Thus finally, the bottom of the sea being laid bare by tempest and violent storm, and the gates of death being opened, Jahvé draws forth the lost one with a strong hand, mightily protecting him from all his foes, vv. 16-18. And now the language, the grand picture being completed, passes more calmly into the simple imagery, vv. 19-21. This entire



portion of the song, the most vivid and artistic, thus falls into three smaller divisions, and each of these again into two similar halves: cause and beginning of the Divine deliverance, vv. 5-9; details ever more exact and complete, vv. 10-14; completion, vv. 15-20, and the figure of the sinking in the depths, with which the whole begins, vv. 5, 6, is thus designedly at end again taken up and completed, vv. 16, 17. But precisely because the single figure of the water, including all the rest in itself, remains unchanged from the beginning to the end,—we must unquestionably read, instead of *הבלי*, ver. 5, which has found its way into the text from ver. 6, *משברי* according to Samuel, since only this is here suitable. But also for *מִיֹּת*, which appears early enough in ver. 6, is rather *מִיִּם* to be held the original reading, as the phrase is found in xciii. 4, and abbreviated in cases like xlii. 8.—Ver. 7. That *היכל* denotes here not the temple at Jerusalem, but the heavenly palace, is quite plain from the sequel. *לפניו* appears earlier than *באזניו*, which Samuel has, a later addition; for one of the two is certainly not original. On the other hand, *הבא* is wanting in Samuel, inaptly. Ver. 8. For *הרים*, Samuel has certainly the more original *השמים*; *the foundations of the heaven* (comp. the counterpart, ver. 6) are the extreme mountain-tops as bearers and pillars of the heaven, according to a representation rare among the Hebrews, but plainly appearing also in Job xxvi. 11. Thus *all* the earth and heaven fell into commotion as in an earthquake.—Vv. 10-12. A fine delineation of the quickly-gathering, violent storm. *He bowed the heaven*, which with the burden of dark clouds, seems ever to sink deeper, and to touch the smoking mountains, as is further explained later, Ps. cxliv. 5. But Jahvé seems to be concealed in the dark mass of clouds, borne by the Kerûb as by the storm, threatening to approach the earth. The clause *ויערפל* is a static clause (§ 341 a).—Ver. 12 contains unquestionably (against the confused reading of Samuel) two members, each falling into two halves. With fine cadence the



ever more blackly gathering storm is described, until it reaches "darkest waters, densest clouds," comp. § 313 c.—Ver. 13. Very noteworthy is the description of the manner in which the darkest water discharges itself. As it is discharged, there appears suddenly a bright flash, tearing asunder the gloom of the heavy clouds. It is as if the gleam of light which always immediately encompasses Jahvé (Hab. iii. 4), breaking forth with His word, divided the gloom asunder. Hence with brevity, *before the brightness before Him, i.e.,* which immediately surrounded Him, *passed away his dark clouds,* while He scattered them, and breaking forth revealed Himself. Very aptly is then figured by the repeated exclamation: *hail and coals of fire!*—how unceasingly during the near-resounding thunder the Divine weapons are hurled down (Samuel certainly very incorrectly omits the last part of ver. 14). Hail is very rare in Palestine, but if it falls, ordinarily the more fearful and destructive, comp. Job. xxxviii. 22, 23, Jos. x. 11. מִן־שָׁמַיִם, Sam. is better. Thus He sends, ver. 15, lightnings as His arrows, to divide asunder *them* the threatening floods, or without figure, the enemies; for that the suffix ver. 15 refers immediately to water is clear from the following explanation, ver. 16, and from the beginning, ver. 5, to which the poet now recurs. בָּרַח must be the verb = בָּרַחַה, בָּרַחַה, the LXX in Samuel correctly ἡστραψεν, comp. the correct explanation, cxliv. 6.—Ver. 16. For מִן־שָׁמַיִם Samuel, has the better reading מִן־שָׁמַיִם, comp. Ex. xiv. 21.—Ver. 17 שָׁלַח, *stretch*, where in the connexion the language is plainly of taking and seizing,—may readily stand without the nearer object "hand," as even in prose, 2 Sam. vi. 6.

3. Vv. 21-31. Not without reason did the poet conclude the long first main part, v. 20 b, with the brief new expression—let God save him *because He favours him*, loves him. By this means the full transition is suddenly prepared, to the detailed description from the one side of the human reason for that deliverance, in order thereby to recur to the praise of God from this moral



side. The poet feels, that only because he has never striven in thought or deed to depart from Jahvé, could he on the other hand be favoured and delivered by Him. This, first briefly expressed in vv. 20, 21, is then argued out in vv. 22-25, in order in a second strophé, vv. 26-31, that he may return from the general truths which here are fundamental, vv. 26-28, the more purely to his own moral experience, full of gratitude to God, vv. 29-31. But if the peculiar feeling of the poet rests here upon the general eternal relation of reciprocity between God and man, according to which God ever deals with man as man with God, vv. 26, 27; and if even the faithful man has often to suffer, as indeed the poet above narrated of himself,—nevertheless, humility and patience, and the consciousness of that inward purity, yield true hope and strength, ver. 28. The poet feels with joy that he has overcome all dangers, not by himself, by proud self-seeking endeavours, but in the midst of perpetual anguish and distress, patience and endurance, through Jahvé alone, vv. 29-31. We see the poet clearly understands the true mode of inward preparation and sanctification. But it is from no vain pride that he refuses to conceal his own inward nobleness—although later uninstructed readers might very readily misunderstand such expressions,—but from child-like innocent transparency and inspired feeling. We must not overlook the manner in which the non-departure from Divine commands, ver. 22, is explained by the direction of the disposition, ver. 23, comp. xvi. 8. The various reading of Samuel in the second clause, ver. 23, is hence less suitable.

Vv. 26, 27 appear to speak very harshly and crudely of God, but in truth not incorrectly. For it is a necessary truth, that man is conscious of God in his breast after the manner in which he conceives and defines Him,—and this reciprocal relation is moreover required externally by eternal justice. As then he who conducts himself piously, uprightly, purely, feels in himself and experiences without himself that God is the like: so upon the perverted man, thinking and acting perversely, this per-



versity has necessarily a reactive operation. Within and without himself he loses more and more the Divine light, and finally, forsaken of true counsel and true happiness, must think to know God as a perverted, malicious, ungracious being. So is it in the midst of life ; more exact inquiries on the extent and limitation of these feelings do not belong to this place. Ver. 28. עַם must, on account of the general saying, be our "people," comp. ver. 44. A reference to Israel lies neither in the word in itself, nor would it be in anywise suitable here. In the second clause the reading — here too allusive — of Samuel probably arose merely from the false reading of עֵינַי as עֵינִיר, the last stroke of the ם being effaced.—Ver. 30. The punctators have רָצָה, because they derive it from רָצָה "run." The uniformity of the members is not however to be so strictly taken ; and to the thickly thronging band, רָצָה from רָצָה "break through," better suits. This part issues, ver. 31, in a brief celebration of Jahvé's praise, that is, which is the immediate suggestion in this place, of His moral trustworthiness and purity.

4. Vv. 32-46. On the other side it is equally true that the poet, only in covenant with *this* God, the eternal and true God, could experience such salvation. *He* only gave him the true strength, and arms *for the* fight, vv. 32-36 ; the true strength *in the* fight, vv. 37-41, and so the great victory, vv. 42-46. But what strength and what all-overcoming courage and what nobleness this very God may give, he has recognized in his own experience, and he can sufficiently render thanks for out of his own long life. The figures of the raging war and of the constant victory over all, even distant foreign peoples, pass away here, in the presence of these recollections. But the poet finely begins, ver. 36, to celebrate the Divine powers of salvation alone as the forces and arms wherewith Jahvé has equipped him and destined him to be victor. How much of bodily strength and bodily aptitude, how many arms the warrior needs ! as David here brings out, quite similarly to the song of praise, 2 Sam. i. 21-23. But



he knows that only the Divine strength could so furnish and equip him, that the best *shield* was His *salvation*, the best support His *righteousness*, and the best exaltation in misfortune His gracious condescension (humility), as is said at the close of the strophé, ver. 36, in the briefest and aptest manner. And similar is it with the forces as man employs them *in the midst* of the battle, as David in the second strophé, vv. 32-35, in further retrospect of all the experiences of his earlier warrior-life sketches the most picturesque description of them. Hence, passing on to the recollection of the long series of the victories he had gained, he cannot here refrain from the new thought of how also his enemies in distress cried to heaven for help, but in vain—for the mere cry for help cannot yet bring deliverance—vv. 42, 43.

In this way a counterpart to the previous grand delineation, vv. 5-21, appropriate to the whole connexion of the song, arises. But the more does he recur, as to the last conclusion, to the thankful description of the great victory which has now been obtained, vv. 44-45. And since the whole song properly aims only at thanksgiving and praise to Jahvé, this must again be prominent with the greater force towards the end of the long words. Thus the language here soon passes unobserved into address to Jahvé, from whose grace the poet derives all his greatness.—Ver. 32 reminds us strongly of Deut. xxxii. 4 sqq., but where the original is retained, is not long doubtful. Comp. also 2 Sam. vii. 22. For וַיֵּתֶן, ver. 33, Samuel has probably the more original reading, וַיֵּתֶן; וַיֵּתֶן, “let free” might then be taken absolutely for “leave,” “let be,” but וַיֵּתֶן is then a still better reading, since וַיֵּתֶן stands in any case here in the natural sense, like Prov. i. 12. On the other hand Samuel introduces in this and the following clause the third person, which does not suit this whole strophé, nay would insert a general proposition about the upright man not belonging to this connexion.—Ver. 34. Speed of foot indis-



pensable in attack as well as flight. *On my heights*, on those which I have ascended, have occupied, *he causes me to stand*, it being impossible for an enemy to pursue and hunt me down. The possession of Palestine depends on the possession of the heights. Here is the original to Hab. iii. 19.—Ver. 35. How monstrously heavy were frequently the bows, and how laborious it was to bend them (נָחַת properly press down the bow with the foot, otherwise *tread*) we best learn from many stories in epic description, as in the *Odyssey* and in the *Ramajana*.\*—But the true arms and means of defence—ver. 36 adds—are the divine, the shield of his salvation, his right hand for the holding of the falling one, His condescension and kindness (xlv. 5) wherewith he comes down from His elevation in order to exalt the helpless. The reading עֲנֵתָךְ Sam., which must have then been pronounced עֲנֵתָךְ, arose through hasty omission or erroneous reading of the ו.—Ver. 38, אֲשִׁיגֶם against Samuel is defended by vii. 6, Ex. xv. 9, as by the good connexion.—Ver. 41. A very short expression: *Thou settest (makest) my enemies to the back*, backwards, *i.e.*, causest them to turn their backs to me, to flee, xxi. 13, Ex. xxiii. 27. Ver. 42. יִשְׁעֵי Samuel, arose again through the cursory omission of the ו in יִשְׁעֵי; this is sufficiently defended by the context and by ver. 7. On the contrary, in ver. 43 “before the wind” (as dust flies before the wind) might be held an irrelevant addition in the Psalm, since here the shattering, not the scattering is the main thing. Comp. ver. 39 whither the language recurs, quite otherwise places like Isa. xli. 2, 15, 25. Again, subsequently, Samuel would have better read אֲרִיקֶם for אֲרִיקֶם *I empty them out*, spout them out. But if all the various readings of both books be taken together, and the sense is more sharply examined, it is most probable that the words originally ran somewhat as follows:

\* Comp. also Her. iii., 21. Ibn.—Batuta in the *Journ. As.*, 1823, i., p. 228. *Nibel.*, xvi., 961. *Berl. Akad. Abhl.*, 1851, p. 278.



תִּהְיֶה כְּמֶזֶץ עַל פְּנֵי רוּחַ  
 וּכְקֶשׁ יָבֵשׁ תִּרְיָקֶם  
 וְאֶשְׁחָקֶם כְּעֹפֶר אֶרֶץ  
 כְּטִיט חוּצוֹת אֶרְקָעֶם

Thou drivest them hence as chaff *before wind*,  
 as dry straw Thou spoutest them out  
 that I may bruise them as earth-dust,  
 trample them as dirt of the streets.

Though this strophé thus becomes longer by a verse, yet the whole is perfectly appropriate. Ver. 44. Sam. has much more expressively, and suitably to the whole song, תִּשְׁמְרֵנִי for the bald תִּשְׁמְרֵנִי.—Ver. 45. “By the hearing of the ear,” *i.e.*, already from afar; for the sound makes its way further than the hand. Similarly, but in another application, Job xlii. 5.—Lastly, in ver. 46, a forcible brief figure, setting forth how little resistance the enemy can make. They *melt away*, exhausted in the severe battle, Ex. xviii. 18, and *tremble out of their strong castles*, the fortresses, begging for grace and protection. Mic. vii. 17 well explains this. הרג is *harakh*, Arab., to be narrow, distressed (Sur. vii. 1) *flee*. On the other hand the reading הגר must have been compared with *chagar*, Syr. *limp*.

5. Vv. 47-51. Conclusion in joyous praise of Jahvé, the Deliverer, all the previous figures being here once more compressed in brief touches. Comp. 2 Sam. vii. 26. The הִי־נִחַיִּים *live!* in the like connexion is antiquely simple, § 223 b.—אֲנִי־חַיִּים ver. 49 is indeed very rare in more ancient songs, and is only frequent in certain later ones. That it might however be found in David's time is shown by Judges v. 29. Ver. 50 I consider to be the original of a saying which so often occurs in later times. Later poets thus sung in the expectation that the religion of Jahvé must be extended ever more widely and without fear and dread among the Gentiles also, in the midst of whom they in part lived. But if David thus sung, with not quite the same experience and expectation, he had never-



theless conquered through Jahvé the Gentiles, and could not delay to proclaim Jahvé's praise before the whole world wherein he ruled. David and Solomon's lofty age is thus characterized for the first time by a striving to bring the Gentiles also to the religion of Jahvé; an endeavour which soon came to an end, was only prophetically maintained; but finally, in consequence of the exile, again appears with new zeal and new light, in a more powerful and comprehensive form.

Meanwhile, he who stands in the highest position, and has been the longest prosperous, may the more readily be led astray by sudden temptation, and the more deeply fall; David, already long king in Jerusalem, did not even remain untouched by the great danger. How severe and bitter is such a fall, and after what deadly struggles salvation may again arise; and again, how glorious is the finally attained victory of a spirit like David's, is shown in the following quite peculiar song:

### 13. PSALM XXXII.

The poet has successfully maintained a sore inward struggle, and now stands on the threshold of a new time. He had sinned greatly, led astray by passion. Sin has its logical consequences, and the evil conscience its obduracy. But while the poet thus at first sought to continue to live in the mood of mind in which he had sinned, and to defend himself, the inward and outward consequences of his sins, unrest, grief, misery,—became ever more consuming and deadly. In the most burning sorrow he groaned forth a prayer to God for help, without however finding relief and refreshment. At last, when he was now exposed to the extreme danger of entire perdition,—inwardly changed, weary of deceptions, having come to a nearer consciousness of the greatness of his guilt and to true repentance,—he again found rest and serenity in the clearness and the peace of God.

Again he vividly heard in his soul the voice and the counsel of God, and with higher confidence glanced towards the



future. At this stage, whither we here see him arrived, he experiences the blessing which springs from sincerity before God, and the folly of seeking to resist, like irrational beasts, the higher (Divine) reason. And all this so extremely and powerfully, that he feels himself compelled to communicate this his own experience to all the world, and to exhort all to avoid spiritual self-deception. This song has then, because springing from such a state of feeling, a decided tendency towards general representation and exhortation,—the personal experience of the poet appearing only as elucidation and deduction. The more general teaching coming forward from the very first, becomes towards the end, as it passes into exhortations, alone predominant. And thus the whole falls into four strophés. First comes out calmly the blessed truth, the basis of the whole song, that only the man who practises no deception before God may expect salvation, vv. 1-2. This indeed the poet, as the second strophé says, vv. 3-5, has most powerfully experienced in his own person. To this personal experience there is joined on the one side the intense wish that every pious man may at the right time apply in prayer to God. Thus the poet, though once in a condition of deadly peril, yet now with joyous assurance feels that he returned at the right time to a right mind, so that he may now eternally experience the protection and counsel of God, vv. 6-8. On the other side is the exhortation to all not foolishly to resist God, since the sinner has many sorrows, whilst the righteous man rejoices in God and ever may rejoice, vv. 9-11.

The song is plainly ancient, original throughout, the token of a powerful mind. Hardly can the inward misery of a torn heart, together with the higher serenity of the again reconciled and sanctified one, be more intensely expressively and powerfully described than here. The more severe the struggle was in this heart, the more glorious the victory, the more clearly and joyously now streams from him the earnest word. Since too the stamp of the language is Davidic, it



cannot be doubted that the song was sung after the event narrated in 2 Sam. xii. The fact that neither Nathan nor any other prophet is here named as the instrument of awakening David, would be a very slight objection, since David would never have experienced remorse had not the power of the prophetic word inwardly seized him, and sharpened anew the feeling of truth in him which had been merely repressed. Again, we must in any case assume that the poet, not during the change itself, but at some later time, after he had completely regained inner rest and serenity, in the higher survey of all the past, and of the whole order of Divine grace, thus speaks; and in this song concludes as it were the whole tragedy which had passed in his inner life. By this circumstance especially this Psalm is greatly distinguished from that indited in the midst of his conversion, before he fully regained rest, li. The first echoes of vv. 1-2 we find in Prov. xxviii. 13.

The three verses of each strophé are extended to seven verse-members. On the shorter first one, comp. I, pp. 168 sqq.

## 1.

- 1 Blessed he whose misdeed is forgiven,  
     whose sin is pardoned !  
 Blessed the man to whom Jahvé imputes not guilt,  
     and in whose spirit there is no deceit !—

## 2.

- When I was silent, my bones mouldered,  
     whilst I continually groaned ;  
 for heavily did thine hand oppress me day and night ;  
     my sap was changed into summer's dryness. \*
- 5 My sin I declared to Thee, not concealing guilt,  
     said, " I confess to Jahvé my faults :"  
 and Thou removedst the guilt of my sin ! \*



## 3.

Therefore let every godly man pray to Thee at the right  
time :

They will, in flood of many waters,  
not reach to him !

*Thou* art a shelter to me, wilt guard me from trouble,  
ever surround me with jubilations of deliverance ! \*

“ will teach, thee, point out the way thou shouldst go ;  
will lift mine eyes on thee ! ”

## 4.

Be not like horse or mule without insight !

bit and bridle must close his jaws,  
that approaches thee unfriendly.

many sorrows has the wicked man : 10

but he who trusts in Jahvé, him does He surround with  
grace.

Rejoice in Jahvé, and be merry, ye righteous !

Shout for joy all ye upright in heart !

Ver. 4. Whilst the poet felt himself externally bowed down by sore sufferings as from the hand of the chastising Jahvé (Job. ii. 5 ; xiii. 21), his inner part was at the same time burnt up and withered by the most glowing anguish, as if his body with sap and blood had been changed into the driest summer ground : comp. cii. 4 ; xxii. 16 ; lxix. 4.—Ver. 5. Note here the poetic change of the imperfect and perfect in the two substantial parts of this sentence, *I confess—thou hast forgiven*, wherein the sense is : *so soon as I confessed—thou hadst already forgiven*. So closely and necessary do both hang together, and so truly does God's act anticipate his. In the intermediate words, כַּסִּיתִי, אָמַרְתִּי, the unusually selected present is resolved into the ordinary tone of narration : comp. § 357 b. The Divine pardon is not here further pursued ; but its consequences and its nature are further touched upon, vv. 1, 2, 7, 8.—Ver. 6. That יִתְפַּלֵּל is to be taken as jussive



is shown, apart from the connexion of the whole song, by the assuring  $\text{לֵךְ}$ , subsequently occurring. *Only*, if he, as I wish, prays at the right time, will, though certainly in a great deluge, which threatens to carry everything away, the waves not reach him. Finally, then, will he stand, though in the most threatening danger. A main part of the emphasis lies on  $\text{לְעֵת מַצָּא}$ , *at the time of the reaching* ( $\text{מַצָּא}$ , reach, reach to, Num. xi. 22); *i.e.*, at the time when the goal, the object can still be reached, therefore at the suitable right time, like the Lat. *aptas* from Sansk. *âp reach* *ἰκανός*, LXX rightly according to the sense *ἐν καιρῷ εὐθέτω*.—This hope has also entered the poet's heart. He hears again, and more vividly than before, the Divine voice within him, and it is to him as if Jahvé's counsel and leading would never forsake him, ver. 8. In fact, a beautiful revelation of simply strong, truly enlightened faith: comp. Isa. xxx. 20, 21.  $\text{וְעָנִיתִי$  cannot mean in this connexion "I will counsel;"\* but  $\text{עָנִי} = \text{עָנָה}$ , *wadda*, Arab., properly fasten, ground, hence figuratively counsel, so far as this is a supporting, holding; and remains here in the sensuous signification, as the LXX rightly *ἐπιστηριῶ*, and as it is explained in common speech by the better known  $\text{וְעָנִיתִי}$ , Gen. xlv. 21; Isa. xxiv. 6; xl. 4.—Ver. 9. The  $\text{עֲדָיו}$  is here harsh. Either  $\text{עֲדָיו}$  is derivable from  $\text{עָדָה}$ , "attire of the body, especially of the head,"—the reading of the Massora and the explanation of the Targum; with bit and bridle, his trappings, is he to be tied (to be bound) who approaches thee not. Thus bit and bridle may indeed form a glittering equipment of the horse, as an obstinate, self-willed man may outwardly show off to the last degree in his pride and scorn: but is this attire a noble and a worthy one? Meanwhile the bringing into relief of this very thought of attire lies remote

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\* It is incomprehensible how it should still be sought to defend this groundless meaning. But a Latin or Greek school-word like *constructio praegnans* seems, in the eyes of so many German scholars of the present day, always quite sufficient to cover everything they do not wish to see.



to the whole context. The figure must be simpler, and the בלם "fasten," demands a more exact definition of the trait in the picture thereby given. But the עֲרִי, according to ciii. 5, might be derived from quite another root, as if it meant *his temper is to be fettered*. But this word does not mean generally, or in a bad sense, *temper*, but only *appetite of eating*. Most appropriate is certainly the explanation, after the LXX, by "jaws," so that עֲרִי would be read, and עַד as = *khad*, Arab., or the cheek itself would be named from *eating* (like *mandibulum*), so that the root of both words would be the same, and the reading עֲרִי might be retained in the same signification. If the first member of the second half reads thus: with bit and bridle are his cheeks to be tied (*i.e.*, his resistance to be fettered), in the second supplementary member "of that which unfriendly approaches thee," the transition into the address to God may be more readily tolerated; for the whole second half of the verse thus very markedly drops the hortatory address to man, passing over in the same figure to the representation of the truth in itself, as ver. 10 then immediately adds the many sorrows which the foolish man, just because he strives against reason, and allows himself to be forced against his will, suffers. קָרוֹב in *constr. st.* (§ 289 *b*) describes with אֵל the friendly loving approval and devotion which should exist between man and God: comp. Zeph. iii. 2, and elsewhere, for the sense Isa. xxxvii. 20; Hos. iv. 15; Prov. xxvi. 3.—סוֹבֵב, ver. 10, just as in ver. 7 (§ 283 *b*).

The changeless rest and assurance that David attained in his later age, is shown in the following two songs:—

#### 14-15. PSALMS III. IV.

Ps. iii. belongs, with the following, plainly to the same poet, and also probably to the same time, only that Ps. iv. appears to be somewhat later; and it cannot be doubted that they, as the superscription to Ps. iii. says, fall in the period of the flight from Absalom. The elevation, the stamp, the style of David



are unmistakable. But as one who had now long stood on the summit of human power, now long enjoyed the highest favour with God; the higher calm towards the end of a much disturbed, but ever growingly blessed life, is brought out in all his words. And with infinite frequency already (comp. iii. 5, iv. 4) had the poet poured forth his feelings in songs, strengthened himself in confidence towards God. New occasion for this is given by the most recent ever increasing danger, and the thereby increased spiritlessness of friends. But the old trust in God readily overcomes anew in brief and mighty prayer all sense of distress. Thus these songs appear as new brief outbursts of a poet long used to song and prayer. And since David may, especially in the time of Absalom, have sung very many songs, it would be thence explained why in these two little songs Absalom is not expressly mentioned, even if it were not admitted that Absalom was but a tool in the hands of David's enemies, and if we did not readily perceive that David in that tender feeling with which he clung to Absalom (2 Sam. xviii. 5-22) would wish nothing evil against his son. But in the circumstance that the poet, however fate may turn, before every thing desires blessing on the head of Israel, iii. 9, we recognize very clearly the noble spirit of David in that flight, which might exorcise the gathering, threatening storm, and roll off from the people the burden of the approaching civil war: almost, as he explained at the end of the prayer, willing rather to sacrifice himself and his hope, so that it might but further the welfare of the people. The one short word throws a bright light upon the depth of his noble soul.

More closely, the occasion to Ps. iii. must be sought in the elevation and strengthening which an unexpectedly quiet night gives the poet (vv. 6, 7). The calmer mood of a cheerful morning is here expressed, whilst the distress which returns, vv. 2, 3, must immediately give way before the memory of the long tried (vv. 4, 5), and even now in the last night again experienced Divine strengthening, vv. 6, 7; so that at last



higher boldness as well as tranquil resignation in fulness returns, vv. 8, 9. Accordingly, four brief strophés; but so that the two middle ones are more closely connected together.

## 1.

Jahvé! how many are my oppressors become! 1  
 many lift themselves against me,  
 many say of my soul:  
 "no salvation has he in God." \*

## 2.

Yet thou, O Jahvé, art a shield around me,  
 my pride and lifter-up of my head!  
 loud I cry to Jahvé, 5  
 and He heard me from the holy mountain. \*

## 3.

I laid me down and slept:  
 awoke, because Jahvé supports me;  
 I fear not before many thousand people,  
 who have encamped against me round about.

## 4.

Up then, Jahvé, help me my God!  
 Thou didst verily strike the cheeks of all my foes,  
 the teeth of the wicked Thou didst break to pieces!  
 Jahvé's is the victory!—  
 Upon Thy people thy blessing! \*

Ver. 3. The words of desponding men, that the ancient truster in God, now near to perishing, must have lost his health in God, are, as is readily understood, not heard aloud by the poet; yet the poet knows that they thus think of the health of his life; comp. iv. 7. So we must manifestly in ver. 3 think of lukewarm friends. Ver. 5 must depict a habit of the poet's, whereby he is repeatedly sure of his hope in God; so often as I



cry or cried to God, I felt that I was heard from Sion. The ark of the covenant had therefore long been in Sion.—Ver. 6. The proof from that one last might; because of the new thought ~~is~~ stands forward with emphasis.—Ver. 8. Picture of a wild, unruly beast. But such wild raging enemies the poet had earlier in great numbers: therefore plainly again of the many battles of David.

Ps. iv. is according to ver. 9 an evening song, and most probably sung on the evening of the same day on the morning of which the previous song had sounded. In the short interval the danger had become more urgent. But freshly then had arrived the report of continuous passionate slanders and invectives wherewith many pursued the noble fugitive, as we know to be the fact from the history of the Absalomian time, 2 Sam. xxv. Comp. iii. 3. The louder, however, the slanders become and the more the poet is forced to reply to their contents, the clearer speedily becomes to him their entire baselessness. Instead of being bowed down by the truth and injury of the slanders, his noble and clear consciousness with the more strength and boldness, and what he would on another occasion not so clearly have confessed to himself, not so boldly have expressed—stands now suddenly in a clear picture before his soul, and escapes from his lips in righteous indignation at the baseless slanders. It is the certainty of higher strength and distinction through the God whom he truly honours. If every truly great and noble man feels most powerfully his inward strength and elevation in the very crisis of danger, and when threatened by baseness, it is not surprising if David, becoming momentarily conscious of all his elevation, turns immediately to denounce in noble wrath his distant slanderers, who are nevertheless clearly present in all their pitifulness to his spirit. He reminds them in serious castigatory language of the truth; and since they have accused of sin to God Himself the noble man, the beloved of God, dragging him into the dust,—to God who wondrously protects His beloved,—he counsels them in quiet



and repentance again to seek God's grace; as if David desired, although irritated and injured to the highest degree, not personal revenge, but merely reverence and awe before the human and Divine majesty which are present in the covenant. The outburst of this feeling is the predominant and impelling force in this song, because it was in that time new. After a short cry to God, ver. 2, the poet is induced by his noble feeling, irritated at the baseness of the slanders, to use most threatening language against the slanderers. He by no means first prays God to secure him against slander, but is so full of the feeling of the unworthiness of such liars, that, in higher flight and prophetic certainty, he immediately uses denunciation against them, vv. 3-6. At last, vv. 7-9, returns, in calmer collectedness, and with a glance upon what is nearer at hand, a feebler echo of the previous song, but already with the higher peace gained by repeated prayer. And so the wish: that to remove the ever continuing despondency of his friends, soon may a beam of Divine salvation come! But *in himself* the poet feels fear nor gloom no longer. A higher Divine serenity already dwells in him, and in restful confidence he looks upon this night and all the future. Thus three unequal strophés (comp. I. p. 171, *Dichter des A. B.*).

## 1.

Hear me when I cry, God of my right, 2  
 Thou who didst give me space in distress;  
 be gracious to me and hear my prayer!

## 2.

Ye sons of man! how long shaming my glory  
 will ye love vanity  
 will ye seek lies?\*

Know then, Jahvé has distinguished the man true to him  
 Jahvé hears when I cry to him!  
 quake and—sin not!  
 consider it on your couch and—be silent!



give the due sacrifices,  
and turn in hope to Jahvé!

## 3.

There are many who say: "Would that we might see  
good!"

lift the light of thy glance upon us, O Jahvé!  
Thou hast given a joy into my heart  
higher than when one has much corn and must.  
In peace I lay me down and rest at once!  
for Thou, Jahvé, alone—  
wilt cause me to dwell safely!

Ver. 2. Since in the first strophé something more than the mere cry, at least the ground of the poet's hope must plainly appear, because the poet, relying upon that, turns forthwith to his slanderers: *בצר הרח* must be taken as a relative sentence, as a continuation of *אלהי צדקי*. Ver. 3 *לכלמה כבודי* forms an interpolated proposition, placed dependently (in the accusative) in remarkably brief phrase: that my glory becomes a shame—shaming my glory. Comp. § 341 *b*. Ver. 6. The sacrifice is here that for sin already committed; they are to sin no more, ver. 5, and turning in believing confidence to God they are to atone for their former deed. The mode of speech, ver. 7*b*, occurs here manifestly to the king in sudden reminiscence of the primæval priestly form, Num. vi. 20. Ver. 8. The suffix *־ך* is to be taken as in the verb the third person plural, without definite object before the mind, xlix. 9; lxxv. 10. § 294 *b*. The opposition in the sense is this: the inner serenity and Divine joy, as the poet now feels them, is also, in the absence of all external enjoyments and splendours, much higher than the greatest superfluity and the most noisy outward joy, as, *e.g.*, there was at the harvest festival after a rich harvest. For we must not overlook the fact that the oldest kings practically occupied themselves, by taking an actual part



in husbandry and harvest. Comp. 2 Sam. xiii. 23, Isa. ix. 2. But certainly David had at that time no great superfluity, 2 Sam. xvii. 27-29; and simply because he might hear around him at that time every morning and every evening unusually great lamentation over the want of such absolute necessities of life in the camp, his thoughts turn to this picture which is here remote from the other contents of the song. From this underlying thought the poet immediately says further, ver. 9, that he will lie down in tranquil confidence, because Jahvé *alone* is consolation and hope enough for him, and without Jahvé all men's protection will not help him. יְהוָה, putting two things together as coincident in point of time (to lie down, and immediately that one is laid down, to sleep peacefully), cxli. 10, Isa. xlii. 14.

In the connexion חֲסִיד לֹי ver. 4, may be seen a peculiar token of the higher antiquity of this song and of its derivation from David. Later poets, even that king in 1 Sam. ii. 9, say instead of *he who is devoted to Him* in pious love, more shortly חֲסִידוֹ, *His devoted one*. Comp. the *Jahrb. der Bibl. Wiss.*, vii., p. 139.

Besides the above,—of songs which we can with historical certainty ascribe to David, his last words only have been preserved, comp. I. pp. 143 sqq. We subjoin, however, in this place as the most convenient,

#### 16. PSALM II.

Here we listen to a king speaking, who solemnly anointed a short time before in Sion, is full of serious and true feeling concerning his high destiny and strength in Jahvé. Subjected peoples are now threatening revolt and rebellion—as far as we see from no other cause than because they now see, under the fresh and untried rule of the young king, a favourable opportunity for shaking off the apparently heavy yoke of the religion of Jahvé and of the royal house at Jerusalem. It is true that the religion of the dominant people, even if it has no



recourse to compulsion, has always great influence on subjected peoples (comp. only *e.g.* Ps. xviii. 44-50). The subjected heathen peoples also had a great zeal for the re-conquest of their freedom, because they could in that case the more freely fall back into their heathenism. In opposition to them stands the young king, inspired and strengthened by a prophetic encouragement at his anointing as well as by his own consciousness. He is aware that he has a fellowship with Jahvé as His son and earthly representative, and with this truly kingly feeling he surveys the whole scene with calmness. The danger so little affrights him, he rather advances towards it with a lofty clearness of vision and repose of soul. Far exalted above it, he is in the mind to appeal to the thoughtless rebels with a word of serious warning and well-meant menace. The discontented at bottom merely find the dominion of the religion and law of Jahvé oppressive, and desire to return to the old rudeness and licentiousness; and would only fall away at an opportune moment from the king of Sion, because he has founded and maintained the rule of Jahvé over them. But this attempt must most certainly be from the beginning vain in the Divine eyes, provided the king be actually the true king of Jahvé, and that he stand in true covenant with Him. Or, the rebels may suppose that with the new king conditions are changed. If so, he must feel and must tell them that he is Jahvé's true king, that through Jahvé he is strong to subdue all opposition—how much more these insurgents to whom the wise and kindly monarch would counsel a renunciation of their vain attempt, before evil consequences are seen. This song is a noble outburst of these truly great reflections, these sublime sentiments. In detail, too, it is very complete and artistic. The first astonishment and reflection on the true views of the insurgents, vv. 1-3, must be immediately followed by the sharp contrast or the expression of the firm assurance of the futility of such an attempt, and how, if continued, it can only produce serious Divine repulsion and punishment, vv. 4-6. But after



the thought of the poet has been kindled to the highest degree by the sharp decision of the pure contrasts, and has also become clarified, his mind then begins more calmly to reconcile these oppositions by explaining the true condition of things, overlooked by the insurgents, vv. 7-9 ; and in conclusion, by hearty counsel for the future, vv. 10-11. There are thus four strophés, the one flowing out of the other. But the language in the two first advances to an ever higher excitement and tension ; in the two latter, from the point of highest tension, runs a calmer course, and falls to a satisfying conclusion. This is the type of a perfect song, blending in itself rest and unrest, contemplation and sensibility in the finest manner.

This beautiful song must necessarily proceed from the most splendid period of the kingdom, when the purest harmony prevailed between the aims of the theocracy and that of the kingdom, and the king, as the Anointed of Jahvé, felt himself infinitely strong and inspired. This flourishing period of the kingdom is nearly confined to the time of David and the earlier time of Solomon. To this the mention of so many subject-peoples in the song also points ; for at that time Jerusalem was the centre of a great kingdom, embracing many peoples. But David cannot well be the poet. The colour of the style is different ; the flow of the language easier and more symmetrical, the form more polished. In fact, in point of elegance this song surpasses all of David and other poets. Moreover, David was not anointed in Jerusalem, vv. 6-7. See 2 Sam. v. And the reminiscence of the whole earlier life of David before his anointing nowhere gleams through this song. We cannot sufficiently take note of the fact that the speaker here, the Anointed, can appeal, after the inner consciousness of his strength, which is to be approved, to nothing external and historical, but the solemn anointing and the oracle then spoken. Thus, without historical preparation and trial, yet at once strong and wise at his anointing, Solomon only appears.



It is in itself readily explicable and credible that at the death of David, and before Solomon's strength was ascertained, the conquered peoples rose. Although historical books give no account of this, the simple cause may be that those attempts were quite abortive. This may be gathered from the representation of the power of the young king in this song. Moreover, the existing historical accounts of Solomon are very concise. Therefore, we may here assume a song certainly proceeding from Solomon, like which he sang many, according to 1 Kings v. 12. Assuredly, this is worthy of Solomon's fairest time. Indeed, we may think to hear in this Psalm many of David's sublime and royal conceptions continued. Comp. further the *Gesch. des V. Isr.*, iii., pp. 293 sqq. of 3rd edit.

Each of the four strophés has three verses, seven verse-members; only the second six merely, perhaps because a member has fallen out at the end of it.

## 1.

- 1 Why did peoples join together  
and nations meditate vanity,  
the kings of the earth rise up  
and princes have taken counsel together  
against Jahvé and His Anointed :  
“let us break asunder their fetters  
and cast their bonds from us !” ?

## 2.

- He that is throned in heaven laughs,  
the Lord scorns them ;  
then will he speak to them in wrath,  
5 and terrify them in His fury :  
“and I have nevertheless anointed my king  
on Sion my holy mountain !”

## 3.

- Let me tell of the covenant ;  
Jahvé spake to me : “my son art thou,



I have this day begotten thee !  
 Demand of me, and I will give the peoples for thine  
 inheritance  
 and for Thy possession the bounds of the earth ;  
 thou shalt break them asunder with an iron rod,  
 like potter's vessels dash them to pieces !”

## 4.

And now—ye kings, be wise, 10  
 take warning, judges of the earth !  
 reverence Jahvé in fear,  
 and quake in trembling !  
 take counsel, that He be not wrath and ye perish ;  
 for soon doth His wrath kindle :  
 Salvation to all who trust in Him !

Vv. 1-3 form *one* sentence. But from all the descriptions here used, it is clear that at that time designs and conspiracies of all kinds existed, but it had not yet come to brawling and open war against one king among the heathen. The translation *ἐφπύαξαν*, *they brawled*, of the LXX, for *רָגְזוּ* ver. 1, cannot therefore be correct. The correct signification of the word is rather given by the entirely corresponding passages, Ps. lv. 15, lxiv. 3. Comp. the *Jahrbbb der Bibl. Wiss*, v. p. 165, and below on Ps. lv. 15. Vv. 4-6. Now, indeed, Jahvé smiles as it were in all calmness at the vain enterprise ; but *then*, if the foolish work should be carried out,\* He will surprise them with punishment, making Himself felt by them in wrath, and as addressing them : Ye do thus, ye dare to begin an idle war, *although* I have solemnly recognized and consecrated my king, and will therefore protect him ? But in the rapid, wrathful

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The *רָגְזוּ* and the connexion of the speech is so constantly and readily misunderstood, that it may be well to note at least a quite similar throne-speech in the *Shâhnâme* i., p. 214, 4f. Mohl.



address the first member, easily to be supplied, is wanting; and the speaker begins immediately with an additional proposition *וְעַתָּה* pointing to something earlier, and here self-intelligible. Just so, Isa. iii. 14; and as all in the song appears beautifully rounded off, the two first strophes appropriately conclude with the lively open language of the opposed parties, as the true thoughts of each. But on the other hand, the poet is led by the recollection of that solemn moment of anointing, and by the now urgent wish for the reconciliation of the opposing parties, to the further detailed description of the prophetic oracle spoken at the anointing—probably by Nathan, 2 Sam. vii., 1 Kings i. It re-echoes in the poet's soul as a deep truth, and its meaning dispels the confusions of the present time. For if the king actually new-born from the hour of his consecration, entirely feels and lives in Jahvé, there must verily be permitted to him in this covenant the dominion over all that he in this Divine sense seeks. How much more must he be strong against such weak and idle attempts as were at that time in hand. All particular confusions and embroilments, even those in the present, are in the clear glance of the poet readily solved by the fundamental truth, explained by the prophet and living in himself. We need not suppose that the prophet actually said all this to him, or nothing but this. For in the poet himself the truth now lives, and he can freely speak from its inspiration. Here the sharpness and exactness is astonishing with which he comes from the highest primary truth, ver. 7 to the nearer, ver. 8, and to the present case, ver. 9—shortly but not too quickly returning to the object. As regards that fundamental truth itself, its proper substantiation and explanation did not belong to this place; but the contents are very finely set forth with the deepest feeling of the poet, ver. 7. *I* (*אֲנִי* has the emphasis) Jahvé, and no other, have begotten thee *to day*, even now, at the same time with the anointing and the oracle, my son shalt thou from henceforth be, and deem thyself. If every human being must



thus through Jahvé, *i.e.*, spiritually in his maturer age be born anew; yet this new birth has still higher significance in the case of the consecrated and anointed king, in proportion as the king must stand higher than the rest. Before all others the king must, from the sacred moment of his external consecration onwards, become also inwardly a new man. And as he retains all external power, so must he feel himself inwardly to be the son of God, and devote himself to God, as no other can do. This is the idea of the true king, and in this hope he is consecrated. The king who here speaks does not merely feel this in himself; it became public and manifest at the anointing, was prophetically spoken and ratified. Hence the poet here calls it a *חֹק*, *i.e.*, an ordinance clearly announced to the people by the prophet or other interpreter of the Divine will, adopted by the king and by the people, thus mutually consecrated and legalized. Elsewhere it is called a *covenant*, 2 Sam. v. 3; 1 Sam. x. 25. The inner sense of this covenant is clear in the mind of the poet; and thereby he is strong and bold.

The *נִשְׁקוּ בֶרֶךְ*, ver. 12, understood as “kiss the son,” *i.e.*, do homage to the Anointed of the Lord, will not, more closely considered, be here suitable. It appears indeed to agree well with vv. 2, 7; and it might be conjectured that the king would be suitably mentioned once again at the end. But against this is the connexion of all the words, vv. 10-12, where nothing further is said of the king; further, the high tenor of the whole, according to which the poet throughout only conceives and brings into prominence the Divine, regards the rising in this sense properly as a rising against Jahvé, and mentions himself only when it is necessary. That here at the end where all again rises higher and the poet himself becomes a prophetic counsellor in the mind of Jahvé, the mention of the lower relations, of the homage and the king should be even better omitted entirely, appears no false expectation. “Son” again would be in this connexion expressed too briefly and cursorily, in fact, quite



unintelligibly; since it is only in the New Testament, that *ὁ υἱός* in places like John v. 19; viii. 36; Heb. i. 1, can be used so shortly and sharply, and even in these places it is always sufficiently clear in meaning from the context. But the Aramaic *בֵּר* for *בֵּן* is found generally only in the peculiar passage, Prov. xxxi. 2, and there only in the mouth of a woman. But our poet says, according to ver. 7, like all other Hebrew poets, *בֵּן*. The Pesch. which is induced by similarity of sound to translate *נשקו ברא* "kiss the son," hence appears here to prefer the *δράξασθε παιδάλας* of the LXX, *בֵּר* "the louder," would be poetical for counsel, louder warning *nâsdjah*. *נשק* expresses, however, properly a fastening on one another, or suffering to hang (then kiss), and so from the new active (in Piel) it may very well describe a taking hold of, serging. The Targ., similarly, and probably independently of the LXX, *קבילו אולפנא*.

What *service* of Jahvé in this connexion among the heathen it may suffice to think of, is clear from Isa. xviii. 7; Ps. lxviii. 30-34, and other passages of the kind.

We here subjoin further

#### 17. PSALM CXLIV. 12-15,

a piece which indeed so far stands in its present place correctly, as it is elaborated by a later poet from an older song, but afterwards was incorrectly united with Ps. cxliv. 1-11. From the later poet comes plainly only the conclusion, ver. 15, and closely connected with this according to the present connexion of the sense, the word *אִשָּׁר* at the head, ver. 12. Suppose these wrappings removed, which the later poet first placed upon all the remaining words, and we have here an extremely remarkable fragment of a manifestly ancient song. In this, some poet had described the splendid prosperity and happy peace in which at that time the people of Israel lived. As such times of an enduring happy peace and general prosperity in Israel were rare, this free poetic representation of it stands in the



Psalter as a piece of a peculiar character, and shows us how readily the ancient people under the protection of its religion, which furthered real human welfare, lived in happy contentment, provided only that the conditions were those for the development of all the good that lies in a long and honourable peace. But such a time for this people only set in under Solomon's rule. And since the sketch of the occupations of the people and the childlike as well as powerful language of the fragment points us back into early times, there is no reason for doubting that it is really of Solomon's time. But again, the fine picture only here presented of the wall-pillars beautifully hewn in the manner of temple and palace architecture, ver. 12 *b*, points us to the first half of the Solomonic period, when the higher architecture in Israel was domestic, and much occupied men's minds.

The poem itself from which this fragment of so singular a kind has been preserved, was perhaps no Temple song, perhaps also of considerable extent rather than so brief as it might appear at first sight. But the later poet who lived in the still distressful times of the new Jerusalem, gave to the fragment such a setting that the whole has now *this* sense: we, a people of whose peaceful, joyous happiness an ancient poet sketched this splendid picture,—we may not despair beneath the protection of the true God! Thus taken, the short piece might be well adopted into a collection of Temple songs, as plainly the later poet had this in view. No other judgment can be passed upon the small song-fragment. The verse is of long members with the ancient poet, quite otherwise with the late one, ver. 15.

We whose sons are as young trees—growing high in  
their youth, 12

whose daughters as wall-pillars—hewn after a palace-  
pattern.

the granaries full, dispensing corn on corn, 13

\* \* \* \*



- the sheep in thousands, ten thousands on our pastures,  
 14 the cattle teeming, always without abortion,  
       \*           \*           \*           \*           \*  
       and no compulsion of war, no complaining clamour  
       in our markets;  
 15 O hail to the people with whom it is thus,  
       O hail to the people whose God is Jahvé!

The comparison of the young men to freely shooting *seedlings* (young trees in nurseries), and the slender growth of the daughters to fine corner and wall-pillars, adorning the inner hall like Karyatides is finely consistent. The comparison of the tall daughters with such pillars is indeed not rare in other poets (comp. the *domoyah*, *Hamâsa*, p. 184, v. 2; 'Antara in the *Journ. As.* 1840, ii., p. 517; Plaut. *Poen.* iii. 54). But the peculiarity here is the indication of such pattern-pillars, as they were at that time to be seen in Palestine, especially doubtless in Solomon's palaces. The words, vv. 13, 14, are partially obscure to us in the present day because the verse structure appears to be here destroyed, and some verses have probably entirely fallen out. Manifestly, ver. 13 *b* and ver. 14 *a* form *one* verse together, which speaks of the rich condition of the cattle; but then the last member to ver. 13 *a* and the first to ver. 14 *b* must have fallen out. Since the people at that time manifestly sought its chief prosperity in agriculture and grazing, מִן אֶלֶן, *from kind to kind* may be understood of the different sorts of corn. Similarly, the יוֹצֵאת after Amos v. 3, may best be understood of a community which goes forth with its best sons to war, even compelled by a kind of feudal service or our present conscription—which if against the will of the community may give rise to loud complaints. If, then, the words אֵין פֶּקֶד had merely remained from the close of a first verse-member, they might mean *without* hostile irruption, as if it were the happiness of the people neither to be destroyed by hostile invasion nor to be compelled by



conscription to personal service in the war. But if this phrase was closely connected with the preceding *מסבלים*, then *פרץ* must, as if in jesting word-play, with its counterpart *פלט* and *מלט* Job. xxi. 10 (xxxix. 3); B. Isa. xxxiv. 15, lxvi. 7, designate abortion as a *rent*, whereby the fruit falls before its time, falls out of its costly repository, and perishes.

## II.

### SONGS AFTER THE DIVISION OF THE DAVIDIC KINGDOM UNTIL ITS END.

#### 1. SCATTERED VOICES DOWN TO THE EIGHTH CENTURY.

From the two first centuries of this long period a few songs, as all closer examination shows, have been preserved in the Psalter. The fulness of songs from the Assyrian period has manifestly crowded out all the earlier songs to such an extent that only the Davidic have been preserved in somewhat greater number and coherence.

These next songs after the Davidic period are to be recognized, among other signs, by this their single and dispersed occurrence. These are a few, very isolated monuments of a time in which in general the poets had more peculiarity and independence, and the collective life of the people had not yet reached the later uniformity and definiteness.

We cannot but expect that precisely in these times the Davidic colour, the height of joyous feeling and of confidence in his songs, should remain unimpaired in many songs—whether it be in collisions with the Gentiles or in inner struggles and perplexities, but most of all in the royal songs themselves, to which also the song explained in I, pp. 158 sqq.—of a king of the kingdom of the Ten Tribes, 1 Sam. ii. 1-10, belongs. We begin here suitably with



## 18. PSALM XX.

A king is setting out for war against the heathen; and as he previously prays in the sanctuary with sacrifices and vows, the assembled community wish him success and victory, in joyous spirits and clear confidence in Jahvé's spiritual help, already anticipating the victory as certain. Ver. 7 then is plainly a strong pause and important turn, and the transition from the plural into the singular is not to be overlooked. From the review of the whole it becomes clear that first of all vv. 2-6 are sung by the whole community, then after the sacrifice has been offered and the prayers of the king, the priest-prophet strikes in, as if announcing the pleasure of God in the sacrifice, and giving encouragement, vv. 7-9. Finally, the whole community concludes with a short prayer, ver. 10: comp. on the art of the song further, I., pp. 193 sq.—Thoughts and description are here distinguished by grand simplicity. No other Temple song expresses with such ease, beauty, and power the reason of the truth of the firm confidence in Jahvé as vv. 8, 9. By these indications and those of the language the song might be of Davidic time. But a high personality and a grand past does not appear in the king here designated, so that we may rather think of another, but in any case, very early king of Sion.\* At all events, the poet is certainly another person than the king, for whom here blessing is desired. The song is also in a liturgical point of view very important as a fine monument of more ancient times.

(The people).

- 2 May Jahvé hear thee in the day of distress,  
     may the God of Jacob's name defend thee!  
 send thy help from the sanctuary,  
     and support thee from out of Sion;

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\* It has been further shown (*Gesch. des V. Isr.*, iii., pp. 479 sq. (2nd edit.) that we may most correctly assume king Asa to be referred to.



remember all thy gifts;  
 thy fat offering may He accept;\*  
 grant thee thy heart's wish, 5  
 all thy counsel may He cause to succeed !  
 O let us rejoice because of thy salvation,  
 exalt the name of our God ;  
 Jahvé will fulfil all thy prayers !

(The Priest).

Now I know that Jahvé helps His Anointed,  
 will hear him from the holy heaven  
 with the might of the help of His right hand !  
 Those boast of chariots, these of horses,  
 but we of the name of Jahvé our God ;  
 They bow down and fall,  
 but we stand and continue.

(The people).

O Jahvé, help the king ! 10  
 May He hear us on the day that we supplicate !

Ver. 4.  $\text{הַשֶּׁחַד}$  from  $\text{הַשֶּׁחַד}$  *turn to ashes* would refer to cases like 1 Cor. xviii. 38, Lev. ix. 24, which however are more founded in narrations than in prayer. Better from  $\text{הַשֶּׁחַד}$  *fat* : to taste or eat something as fat, *i.e.*, willingly accept a rich food, as the Arabic translator, induced by a correct feeling gives *astdsm*, comp. *astmra*, *Hariri*, I. p. 14, 6. Ver. 6. Now already they might rejoice in the victory and praise Jahvé as conqueror, previously certain that Jahvé will make the king victorious.  $\text{הַגִּבּוֹר}$  related to  $\text{גָּבַר}$  is *exalted* ( $\text{הַגִּבּוֹר}$  the *exalted* sign, banner) hence *praise*, sing, boast, like all words of similar signification connected with  $\text{בִּי}$  of the object. In ver. 8 it is explained by  $\text{הַמְּגַלֵּל}$ , The LXX correctly *μεγαλυνθησόμεθα*. Ver. 7. Now, since the people *prays*, thus courageous and bold in Jahvé, and since the king's sacrifice and prayer is assumed



to be accepted, now *I know that* God helps; and that spiritually from out of heaven. Though the enemies may boast of external strength, and brave it with war-horse and war-chariot, we, although without this external protection, feel inwardly strong through Jahvé, unbent, invincible. Comp. Judges i. 19, iv. 3, 13; Josh. xvii. 16, on the other hand 1 Kings xi. 26-29; Isa. ii. 7. Ver. 10 would be translated according to the accents:

O Jahvé, help!

the King hear us now as we supplicate!

as though *the King* were identical with Jahvé. But absolutely Jahvé can never be so called; and the verse-structure would be grievously injured. The language may rather pass in the second member into the calmer third person, because this verse stands quite alone at the end, its members are thus more readily sundered at the close of the address. Comp. also on Ps. cx. 7, above, p. 112.

#### 19. PSALM XXI.

stands manifestly still in the present series of songs, designedly after Ps. xx., because in contents, as well as in structure and art, it is very similar to it. For the first and longest part, vv. 2-8, is plainly to be sung by the community in prayer on the king's behalf in the sanctuary, then the priest is to strike in with his higher word, vv. 9-13, and finally the congregation again return with brief wishes to their commencing prayer, v. 14. The structure of this alternate song is then entirely the same as in Ps. xx. And although here the sacrifice is not made so verbally prominent as there, yet these alternate songs in like manner are certainly to be sung on the occasion of a solemn festival in the sanctuary, and here too the priest was to reply with his lofty address to the accepted offering of the community. But in other respects an important distinction opens between these two songs, both in regard to



the immediate occasion of this alternate song, and to the tenor of the language, and the age,—in fact to the popular kingdom of the two kings.

The community which here surrounds the king who is present in heathendom, is not one which raises shouts in hopes of victory to the kings as they set out for the field of battle,—as is the case in Ps. xx. and similarly in Ps. cx. (see above, pp. 107 sqq.). The sacrificial festival which has here been made is rather the birthday of the king. This is sufficiently plain. Long has the latter happily ruled, and this happiness too befalls him, that he is able to solemnize his birthday once more with thanksgiving to God in the Temple, ver. 5. His people have gathered about him on the occasion, to thank God with sacrifices on this joyous day, and to pray to God on behalf of his further welfare. But certainly about those times the territory of the king must have been threatened by many foes from without. And although the king now lay not, because of the winter season, in the field, and did not intend forthwith to set out for the war,—the priest in his oracle, following the accepted sacrifice, vv. 9-13, has regard alone to these enemies who threaten from without, and promises the king, with lofty words, the Divine victory over them.

If this was the immediate occasion of the solemnity, we can understand how the form of the language becomes somewhat different from that in the previous alternate song. There the people ranged themselves around their king as he was setting forth for the war. The community accordingly addresses him while he sacrifices, and first the priest then speaks on behalf of all the higher word of faith, with which the community at the close concurs. Here, on the other hand, the community assembles, in order spontaneously to celebrate the solemnity of the royal birthday, and prays on his behalf to God,—whilst the priest, responding to the sacrifice of prayer brought by the community on his behalf, directs the gracious oracle to the