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## THE METHOD OF STUDYING THE PSALTER.

## PSALM XVI.

A PRAYER for God's protecting care, based on the Psalmist's consciousness of the close communion with God which he enjoys, and of which nothing, he feels, can ever deprive him.

V. 1 is the prayer ; vv. 2-4 state the ground of the Psalmist's assurance. Yahweh is his sole good, the sole source of his happiness ; his only delight is in the company of the faithful ; with apostates he will have no fellowship.

- 1 Keep me, O God : for I have taken refuge in thee.
- 2 I have said <sup>1</sup> unto Jehovah, 'Thou art my Lord ;  
    all <sup>2</sup> my welfare (dependeth) upon thee.'
- 3 'As for the holy ones that are in the land,  
    they are the nobles in whom is all my delight.'<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup> So Sept., Vulg., Syr. (cf. xxxi. 14, cxl. 6). The pointed Hebrew text has, *Thou* (fem.) *hast said*, implying an improbable ellipse of 'O my soul'. Comp. the same omission of the final ' in the 1st pers. sing. of the perfect in cxl. 13, 1 Kings viii. 48, Ez. xvi. 59, Job xlvi. 2 (in which cases, however, the omission is corrected in the Qr<sup>6</sup>).

<sup>2</sup> So, reading נִמְנַחָה for בְּכָל (כָל) alone, which has been suggested, is not Hebrew). Lit. 'my welfare, all of it,' emphatic for 'all my welfare' : see, for examples of the usage, Ps. viii. 8, lxvii. 4, 6, 2 Sam ii. 9, Isa. ix. 8, Mic. i. 2, ii. 12, Hab. ii. 6, and *Lex.* s.v. כָל 1d (p. 481b). For בְּלֹעַ = (rests, or is dependent,) *upon*, cf. Jud. xix. 20, Ps. vii. 11 [Engl. 10 : see Kirkpatrick's note], lxii. 8 [Engl. 7]; *Lex.* p. 753c). Another suggestion (Houbigant, Hitz., Duhm) is to read בְּלֹעַ עַל־ךְ for בְּלֹעַ בְּלֹעַךְ, i.e. 'is not *apart from*, or *without*, thee : cf. Symm. οὐκ εἰστιν ἀπό τοῦ ; Jer. 'non est *eine te*' ; Targ. 'is not given *except from thee*' ; and for בְּלֹעַ apart from, without (*xwpli*, אֲבָעֵב), Gen. xli. 44. Either of these emendations would express what seems clearly to be the general idea intended, viz. that the Psalmist depends for his happiness upon God. 'Beyond' (R.V.) is a doubtful paraphrase of בְּלֹעַ ; and 'is not in addition to (Gen. xxxi. 50) thee' is not a natural way of expressing the idea 'is to be found wholly in thee.'

<sup>3</sup> So, with a very slight change (אֲלֹעַ for אֲלֹעַ), and removing the *athnach* from to the end, אֲשֶׁר בָּאָרֶץ הַמִּזְבֵּחַ is incorrect Hebrew for 'who are in the land' : this might be either אֲשֶׁר בָּאָרֶץ or אֲשֶׁר הַמִּזְבֵּחַ (Gen. ix. 3, Num. ix. 13, xiv. 8, 27) ; but the pronoun in such cases never stands at the end, except after a negative (as Gen. vii. 2, xvii. 12, Num. xvii. 5). See my *Tenses*, §§ 198 Obs., 199 Obs. ; and *Lex.* אֲלֹעַ 2c, 3c, 3c, 2c, 3c. For the st. c. אֲלֹעַ before the relative clause cf. Ps. lxi. 5, Job xxix. 2 ; and see G.-K. § 130d.

4 Their sorrows are multiplied that choose<sup>1</sup> another (God);  
their drink-offerings of blood will I not pour out,  
neither take up their names upon my lips.

1. *I have taken refuge.* The figure is one of those expressive ones which we find in the Psalms: he has taken refuge in God, as from storm, or wind (*Isa. iv. 6, xxv. 4*), or stress of foes (*Ps. lxi. 3*); he has confided himself to Him; and on this ground he craves His protection. Both the word and the cognate subst. ‘refuge’ are very common in the Psalms (see my *Parallel Psalter*, p. 454): the paraphrase ‘put trust’ obliterates the metaphor, conceals the connexion with the subst. ‘refuge,’ and suggests an illusory connexion with the ordinary word for ‘trust.’ Comp. the note above, on *ii. 12* (January, 1910, p. 37).

2. *Thou art my Lord*—my master or sovereign, to whose service I am devoted: *all my welfare* (for this sense of **טוֹבָה**, lit. *good*, see *xxv. 13, cvi. 5, Job ix. 25, xxi. 13* [A.V. *wealth* (= *weal*), R.V. *prosperity*, etc]. *dependeth upon thee*: Thou art the sole source of my happiness.

3. The Psalmist proceeds to express his regard for character, above mere position or nobility of birth: the true nobles, in whose society he delights, are not the wealthy or the powerful, but those who realise Israel’s ideal character of ‘holiness’ (*Ex. xix. 6, Deut. xiv. 2*, etc.): with apostates, on the contrary, he will have no dealings; he will

<sup>1</sup> So, reading בְּחִרֵוּ for בְּחִרֵוּ : בְּ and מְ are often confused in Hebrew MSS., and the versions; see my *Notes on Samuel*, p. lxviii. (where many more instances might have been cited). יְלִכְתָּא is a most uncertain word. It occurs nowhere else in a sense suitable here: R.V. ‘exchange [Jehovah] for another God’ depends on the questionable assumption that מְלוֹךְ has the sense of יְלִכְתָּא; besides, not only is there no ‘for’ in the Hebrew, but even granting that it had that sense, we should expect as its accusative, not the object *taken* in exchange, but, as in other cases, the object *given* in exchange, i.e. Jehovah: cf. *Jer. ii. 11* ‘my people have changed their glory *for* that which doth not profit’ (A.V., R.V.); *Ps. cxi. 20* R.V. (‘changed their glory *for* the likeness of an ox that eateth grass’); *Hos. iv. 7* (render similarly ‘change *for*’: A.V., R.V., inconsistently, ‘change *into*,’ which would be לְ, not בְּ; for the בְּ, see *Lex.* p. 90, 3).

not join in their unholy offerings (cf. Is. lxv. 4), or take up upon his lips (cf. Ex. xxiii. 13, Hos. ii. 17) the names of their gods.

*Drink-offerings of blood.* Some heathen rite is doubtless referred to ; we do not know exactly what. The allusion may be to libations of blood offered by apostate Israelites instead of wine and oil.

5 Jehovah is the share of my portion, and my cup :  
thou holdest fast<sup>1</sup> my lot.

6 The measuring-lines are fallen unto me in pleasant places ;<sup>2</sup>  
yea, I have a goodly heritage.<sup>3</sup>

Jehovah, on the contrary, is the Psalmist's apportioned share, and his cup. The figures are derived partly from the distribution of land among a body of settlers, partly from a banquet at which every guest receives in course his share of refreshment.

For 'portion' (*פלק*) in the sense of a portion of land, see Josh. xiv. 4, xv. 13, xviii. 5, 7, etc. ; and in the same spiritual sense, of Yahweh, as here, Ps. lxxiii. 26, cxix. 57, cxlii. 5, Lam. iii. 24, Jer. x. 16=li. 19.<sup>4</sup> The figure implies that the 'portion' is one which the Psalmist has received (from God), not one which he has chosen himself.

<sup>1</sup> So, reading *נִכְרֵךְ* for *נִכְרֵךְ*, which is a *vox nihili* in Hebrew.

<sup>2</sup> Lit. *in pleasantnesses*.

<sup>3</sup> Heb. *my heritage* [read *נִחְלָת* for *נִחְלָה*] : G.-K. § 80g] is *fair* (so A.V., m.) *unto me*. Both the verb *נִחְלָה* and its derivatives are very rare in Hebrew (Gen. xlvi. 21, Job xxvi. 13 (see R.V. m.), Jer. xlvi. 10 R.V. m.) ; but it is common in Aramaic (both Targums and Syriac), where it means not only *to be fair, beautiful*, in a literal sense, but also *to seem fair or good to* ; and it occurs in this latter sense in Dan. iv. 2 (Aram. iii. 32), vi. 1 (Aram. 2), iv. 27 (Aram. 24),—in iv. 27 (where it is rendered, '*be acceptable to*'), followed, as here, by *וּ*. Here it is used probably in its Aramaic sense, the meaning being not '*is beautiful*', but '*is fair, goodly, pleasing*'. On the form *נִחְלָה* see Delitzsch on Ps. xi. 6, or G.-K. § 95 n.

<sup>4</sup> In Nu. xviii. 20, where Yahweh says to Aaron, 'I am thy *portion* and thine inheritance,' the reference is merely to the altar-perquisites and other sacred dues, which formed the maintenance of the priests. 'Portion and inheritance' in Dt. x. 9, xviii. 1 (cf. 2, Josh. xiii. 14, 33, xviii. 7) has a similar meaning.

'Cup' is used elsewhere also in a figurative sense (Ps. xxiii. 5). 'The sense is, Jehovah is the portion which has been assigned to me to satisfy my thirst. The desires and necessities of man's higher life are often represented by hunger and thirst, but especially by thirst as the keener and subtler appetite. Thus we read of a thirst for God's word (Am. viii. 11, 12); but especially the longing of the soul for personal communion with God is spoken of as the thirsting of the soul for Him (Ps. xli. 2, lxiii. 1). Conversely the joys of this fellowship are a "river of delights" flowing from the fountain of life which is with God, and from which He gives His people to drink (Ps. xxxvi. 8, 9).'<sup>1</sup> And here Yahweh Himself, as the full satisfaction of the Psalmist's spiritual being, is called his 'cup.'

*Thou holdest fast my lot*, so that no one can snatch it from me. 'Lot,' meaning properly the 'lot' cast (Lev. xvi. 8), is also used metaphorically of the *land allotted* (Jud. i. 3 *et al.*); here fig. (cf., of misfortune, Is. xvii. 14, Jer. xiii. 25) of the lot in life which the Psalmist enjoys, i.e. of the blessings, spiritual and material alike, which follow from Yahweh's being his 'portion,' and 'cup.'

6. The '(measuring-) lines' and the 'inheritance' carry on the figure of the 'share of my portion' in *v. 5*. For 'line,' in the derived sense of the territory measured by the line, see Josh. xvii. 5 lit. 'And there fell ten *lines* to Manasseh,' and 14 'Wherefore hast thou given me as an inheritance, one *lot* [cf. *v. 5b*, here], and one *line* ?'

*In pleasant places* (lit. *pleasantnesses*). Cf. Job xxxvi. 11 (cited below, on *v. 11*), where the Hebrew word is the same. *Heritage* or *inheritance* (the same word in Hebrew) is elsewhere also used figuratively of a person's lot in life: e.g. Job xx. 29, xxvii. 13, Is. liv. 17. The reference might

<sup>1</sup> W. R. Smith, in an interesting article on this Psalm in the EXPOSITOR, vol. iv. (1876), p. 348.

be to the outward prosperity and security, which accompany Yahweh's fellowship (Cheyne, Bäthgen); but the context (cf. v. 5a) favours the more general view that the 'inheritance' is 'the share which he has obtained among the spiritual joys of God's presence' (W. R. Smith). Or, still more probably, perhaps, a sharp distinction ought not to be drawn; and in v. 6a, b, as in v. 5b, spiritual and material satisfactions alike are contemplated by the Psalmist.

7. In the joyful remembrance that he has such a possession, the Psalmist breaks out into a strain of thanksgiving—

7 I will bless Jehovah, who hath given me counsel ;  
yea, in the nights my reins admonish me.

8 I have set Jehovah continually before me :  
because he is at my right hand, I shall not be moved.

*Given me counsel*; viz. in my course of life. Cf. lxxiii. 24 'Thou guidest me with thy counsel.' The 'reins,' i.e. the kidneys (Lat. *renes*), were in Hebrew psychology regarded as the springs of *feeling*; hence, when God is said to try, or see, the 'hearts and reins,' it is implied that he is cognizant of man's emotions and affections, not less than of his thoughts (which were regarded as having their seat in the heart).<sup>1</sup> Comp. vii. 9, xxvi. 2, Jer. xi. 20, xvii. 10, xx. 12; also Ps. lxxiii. 21, Jer. xii. 2, Prov. xxiii. 16. Thus the meaning here is that, at night time, the time of quiet meditation and reflection (cf. xlvi. 8, lxxvii. 6, xcii. 2; also iv. 4, lxiii. 6), the emotions, or impulses, of his own breast (as we might now say) move him to respond to the Divine counsel, and follow its guidance.

8. His eye is ever fixed towards Yahweh; and conscious that, as he looks to Him, he is secure in having Him ever at his right hand as his champion and helper (cx. 5, cxxv. 5), he exclaims with confidence, *I shall not be moved*, i.e. not be disturbed in my prosperity,—in the 1st or 3rd person,

<sup>1</sup> Comp. the note on Ps. xl. 6 (April, p. 351).

a common expression in the Psalms to denote material security : x. 6, xv. 5, xxi. 7, xxx. 6, xlvi. 5, lxii. 2, 6, cxii. 6 ; cf. also xiii. 4, xciii. 1, xcvi. 10 (in these two passages, of the *social* order of the world being undisturbed, in consequence of Yahweh's assumption of sovereignty), civ. 5, cxxv. 1. Is. xl. 20, xli. 7, where it is used of an idol being displaced, and Deut. xxxii. 25, Ps. xxxviii. 16, xciv. 18 (A.V., R.V., in these passages *slide* or *slip*), where it is used of the foot *giving way* (fig. for falling into adversity), shew the sense in which 'be moved' is to be understood.

9–11. With this assurance of Yahweh's protecting power, his heart and spirit exult : he not only lives a life of undisturbed material felicity, but also anticipates the enjoyment of spiritual communion with God, unbroken even by death.

9 Therefore my heart is glad, and my glory rejoiceth :  
my flesh also dwelleth in safety.

10 For thou wilt not leave my soul to Sheol ;  
thou wilt not suffer thy godly one to see the pit.

11 Thou makest me to know the path of life :  
in thy presence<sup>1</sup> is fulness<sup>2</sup> of joys ;  
in thy right hand there are pleasures for ever.

9. *Glory* is a poetical expression for the highest and most honourable part of man, his immaterial spirit ; so Gen. xlix. 6, Ps. xxx. 12, lvii. 8 (= cviii. 1), and probably vii. 5.<sup>3</sup> His *flesh* also *dwelleth in safety*—an expression often

<sup>1</sup> Lit. *beside thy face*. So xxi. 6, cxl. 13.

<sup>2</sup> Lit. *satiety*, said properly of food ; see the same word in Ex. xvi. 3 ('when we did eat bread *to the full*'), Ps. lxxviii. 25 ('sent them food *to the full*').

<sup>3</sup> This is the generally accepted view. It is, however, possible that we should, both here and in the other passages quoted, vocalise (as the Sept. did in Gen. xlix. 6) 'לִבָּם', i.e. 'my liver' : so e.g. Cheyne in *Enc. B. & B.* s.v. LIVER, and Skinner, in his recently published commentary, in Gen. l.c. The combination of ideas may at first sight seem strange : but in itself there is nothing more remarkable in the liver being regarded as the seat of mental impulses or affections than there is in the kidneys or bowels being so regarded, as they unquestionably were by the Hebrews. The corresponding word in Assyrian, *kabittu*—which, however, is not

used of undisturbed security in Palestine (Deut. xxxiii. 12, 28, Jer. xxiii. 6, xxxiii. 16, Prov. i. 33). ‘Flesh’ is parallel with ‘heart’ and ‘glory’ (i.e. ‘spirit’) here, as with ‘soul’ in lxiii. 1, and ‘heart’ in lxxiii. 26, lxxxiv. 2; it ‘does not denote the dead corpse, but the living organism in and through which the soul works; together with heart or soul, it makes up the whole man’ (Kirkpatrick). The verse thus describes how fellowship with Yahweh guarantees both inward joy and outward security; his spirit rejoices, his body is secure. The rend. of P.B.V., A.V., *shall rest in hope*, ‘beautiful and suggestive as it is, is thus inaccurate and misleading’ (Kirkpatrick); the words do not mean that the flesh after death will rest in the grave in hope, but that the Psalmist, while yet alive, dwells in confidence and security, without fear of danger or death.

10. For he feels confident that he will not be abandoned to Sheol, not surrendered by Yahweh, so as to experience the terrors of the huge dark cavern, deep down below the surface of the earth (in the ‘lowest parts of the earth,’ Ez. xxvi. 20, xxxi. 14, 16, 18, xxxii. 18, 24, Ps. Ixiii. 9: cf. lxxxvi. 13 R.V.m., lxxxviii. 6), and its waters (Job xxvi. 5), where impenetrable darkness reigned (Job x. 21–2), and where the voice of praise was hushed (vi. 5, xxx. 9, lxxxviii. 10–12, cxv. 17, Is. xxxviii. 18), which the Hebrews believed to be the final ‘house of meeting for all living’ (Job xxx. 23 R.V.m.). *To see the pit* (so R.V.m.; Hebrew *sháhah*; not *corruption*, as A.V., R.V.), as xlix. 9: elsewhere to ‘go down to the pit’ is said (xxx. 19, Job xxxiii. 24; and with another word, *bōr*, for ‘pit,’ xxviii. 1, lxxxviii. 4, Ez. xxvi. 20, etc.): conversely, when a person escapes mortal danger, he is said to be ‘kept back,’ ‘brought back,’

found with the actual meaning ‘liver’—has regularly the sense of, *Gemüth*, *mind*, and is said to brighten, rejoice, etc. In English we could paraphrase by ‘bosom.’

'brought up,' or 'redeemed' from it (Job xxxiii. 18, 30, Ps. ciii. 4, Jon. ii. 6: cf., with 'Sheol' and *bōr*, Ps. xxx. 3). The hope which the Psalmist expresses is thus not that he will rise again, but that he *will not die*. By *thy godly one* he naturally means himself. If the plural (which is read by the official Hebrew text, and many MSS.) is correct, other devout Israelites, like-minded with himself, will be included; so that the various reading does not substantially affect the sense. The official Hebrew margin, and the majority of MSS., however, as well as all the ancient versions, have the singular, which agrees better with the context. The term 'godly (*lit.* kindly) one' is used often in the Psalms—and occasionally also besides—to denote the pious Israelite: see my *Parallel Psalter*, p. 443 f.

11. The Psalmist's sense of superiority to death is here further drawn out. *Thou makest me to know*—pointest out to me (cxliii. 8)—*the path of life*. The expression occurs more than once in the Proverbs, where it is opposed to the path which leads to death and Sheol, as ii. 18 f., 'Her house (the house of the 'strange woman') inclineth unto death, and her tracks unto the shades'; None that go to her return again, neither do they attain to the *paths of life*'; v. 5 f. 'Her feet go down to death, her steps take hold on Sheol: Lest thou make level<sup>1</sup> *the path of life*, her tracks totter, and thou knowest it not'; xv. 24 '*The path of life* is upwards for the wise, in order to depart from Sheol beneath': cf. xii. 28 'In the *path of righteousness* is *life*, and her pathway is no-death.' In these passages 'life' means more than merely animal life: it means, or implies,

<sup>1</sup> Fig. for, *free from hindrances*, and so step easily upon. Elsewhere lit. (Ps. lxxviii. 50 R.V. m. 'He levelled a way for his anger'); or fig. for, to *make passable* in a general sense (Prov. v. 21), to *free from hindrances*, whether material (Is. xxvi. 7 'evenly' [*lit.* *into an even one*; G.-K. § 117 *ii*] dost thou *level* the *path of the just*'), or moral (Prov. iv. 26 '*makes level* the *path of thy feet*').

a virtuous and happy life ;<sup>1</sup> in the Psalm it means, or implies, something more even than this, but still something less than the life hereafter of the N.T. ; it is a life of happiness, brightened by a sense of God's presence and favour, a life, therefore, of which it may be hoped that it will not be interrupted by death, but of which this is not expressly affirmed. And so the Psalmist continues, *in thy presence* (viz. during the present earthly life) *is fulness of joys*—joys springing from a sense of God's favour, and from spiritual fellowship with Him ; *in thy right hand there are pleasures* (lit. *pleasantnesses*) *for ever*,—pleasures, that is, abidingly in God's hand, and ever ready to be dispensed by Him, as from an inexhaustible source : cf., for the figure, Prov. iii. 16 ‘Length of days is *in her right hand* ; *in her left hand* are riches and honour.’<sup>2</sup> As the context shews, the ‘pleasures’ meant are blessings given by God, especially the delights which are to be found only in Him, in contrast to fleeting and unsatisfying worldly joys. Comp. the same word—except that the form is there the fem.—in Job xxxvi. 11 ‘If they hearken and serve him, they spend their years in good (i.e. in prosperity), and their days in *pleasantness*,’<sup>3</sup>—where, however, material prosperity seems to be what is principally in the poet's mind.

The idea of a future life is in the O.T. only *nascent*. The ordinary belief on the subject of a future life, shared by the

<sup>1</sup> For the idea of ‘life’ in the Book of Proverbs, comp. such passages as iii. 18 (wisdom a ‘tree of life’ to those who lay hold of her); iv. 13 (‘instruction,’ or moral discipline, a man's ‘life’); viii. 35 (whoso findeth wisdom findeth ‘life’); x. 11 (‘The mouth of the righteous is a fountain of life’); xiii. 12 (‘Hope deferred maketh the heart sick, But when the desire cometh, it is a tree of life’); xvi. 22 (understanding a ‘fountain of life’). Life in these passages is more than merely animal life : it includes higher elements dependent upon a mental or moral state—wisdom, or righteousness, or inward satisfaction.

<sup>2</sup> The rendering ‘at thy right hand’ is contrary to idiom, and incorrect.

<sup>3</sup> So R.V.m. ‘Pleasures’ suggests a hedonism that is not intended.

ancient Hebrews, was, not that the spirit after death ceased to exist, but that it passed into the underworld, 'Sheol,' the 'house of meeting for all living,' without any distinction between good and bad (Job xxx. 23), where it entered upon a shadowy, half-conscious existence, devoid of interest and occupation, forgotten by God, and cut off from His hand (Ps. lxxxviii. 5 'Like the slain that lie in the grave, whom thou rememberest no more, and they are cut off from thy hand'), and not worthy of the name of 'life': 'For Sheol doth not praise thee, death doth not celebrate thee; they that go down into the pit do not hope for thy faithfulness' (Is. xxxviii. 18). But the darkness which thus shrouded man's hereafter was not unbroken in the O.T.: and there are *three* lines along which the way is prepared in it for the fuller revelation brought by the Gospel. There is, firstly, the limitation (Is. lxv. 22), or the abolition (Is. xxv. 8), of the power of death, set forth by the prophets in their vision of a glorified, but earthly, Zion of the future. There is, secondly, the conviction uttered by individuals that their close fellowship with God implies and demands that they will themselves be personally superior to death (Ps. xlix. 15, lxxiii. 24, 26, Job xix. 26). And thirdly, there is the idea of a resurrection, which gradually emerges in the Old Testament.<sup>1</sup> Ps. xvi. stands on the same level as Ps. xlix. and lxxiii. In none of these Psalms is the hope more than a 'postulate of faith,' a 'splendid hope, a personal and individual conclusion';<sup>2</sup> it is no generally accepted article of belief. The Psalmist does not speak explicitly of a future life (for v. 11 does not refer to it at all<sup>3</sup>); but he

<sup>1</sup> See, on the gradual growth in Israel of the belief in a future state, Dr. Burney's excellent *Four Lectures on Israel's Hope of Immortality*, 1909 (in the O.T., the Apocrypha, and Apocalyptic writings), and the present writer's *Sermons on Subjects connected with the O.T.*, pp. 72-98 (in the Book of Enoch and the Targums).

<sup>2</sup> Kirkpatrick, *The Psalms*, p. lxxviii.

<sup>3</sup> Or, at least, does not certainly refer to it: cf. Kirkpatrick, p. 78.

expresses the hope of superiority over death, grounded on the close personal relation in which he himself stands towards God, and which he cannot believe will be interrupted by death. The hope in Pss. *xlix.* and *lxxiii.* is based on the same ground : in contrast to those whose lives are devoted to the world, the writer of each of these Psalms has a conviction that God will 'take' him, and admit him to some greater bliss. But in the full sense of the words used, the hope of Ps. *xvi.* remained an unrealized ideal. The Psalmist suffered the lot of all other men. The Psalm is thus 'Messianic,' not in being a prediction of Christ's resurrection,—for it is plain that the feelings and hopes expressed in it are those of the Psalmist himself, or, at most, if the plural in *v.* 10 be the original reading, of himself and other like-minded godly Israelites,—but in expressing an *ideal*—a hope of superiority to death—which transcended experience, and was fully realised only by Christ. Even by Him, however, the hope was not realised literally, but only in substance ; for Christ did, in the literal sense of the words, 'see the pit.' It is difficult not to think that the application of the words to Christ found in Acts *ii.* 25–31, *xiii.* 35–37 was facilitated by the mistranslations of the Septuagint ('shall dwell in hope,' 'wilt not leave my soul in Hades,' and 'to see corruption'). But the Apostles used arguments of the kind usual at the time, and such as would seem cogent both to themselves and to their contemporaries. As Mr. Edghill says,<sup>1</sup> 'To his [St. Peter's] readers who took for granted the Davidic origin of the Psalter, and who agreed as a matter of course that the Messiah would be the Son of David, such illustrations would have carried considerable force. St. Peter shared their beliefs ; he and his hearers were on common ground ; and it was to increase their faith that he pressed home the witness of the Old Testament scriptures.

<sup>1</sup> *Evidential Value of Prophecy*, p. 495 f.

It does not follow that the ‘ proofs ’ possess for us the same value as they did for the men of that generation. St. Peter had in view the conversion of his own contemporaries ; and to secure that end he employed the arguments which he believed to be true, and knew to be effective.’ The Psalm contains, like the other similar passages referred to above, a great declaration of the faith and hope of an Old Testament saint : it expresses also an *ideal*, both of fellowship with God, and of superiority to death : but, when we study it in itself, and consider it carefully in its original import, we see that *v.* 10 will not support the argument which the Apostles built upon it, and that the Psalm cannot be appealed to, in the way in which they appealed to it, as a proof of the resurrection of Christ.

S. R. DRIVER.