

contemns, though he dares not deny God; and blasphemously says, though 'in his heart' only, 'Tush, God hath forgotten, He hideth His face, He will never see it' (x. 12, 14).

With this may perhaps be appropriately joined the characteristic *uniqueness* of God as exhibited in the Psalms. The thought that God stands alone in the majesty of His being prevails of course throughout the Old Testament, but in the utterances of personal, experimental religion this article of the Jewish creed is exhibited in a striking form. Two words in the Hebrew, one a preposition, the other a conjunction, set forth from different points of view this attribute whereby God stands supremely alone in the devout thought of the Psalmist, though the English renderings of 'alone' and 'only' do not always correspond to this distinction. A few passages will make the general meaning plain. In iv. 8 we read in A.V., 'Thou, Lord, only makest me dwell in safety,' an ambiguous rendering improved in R.V. by the substitution of 'alone' for 'only.' But the marginal rendering, 'in solitude,' shows that there is an emphasis in the original which English readers are likely to miss. The work of caring for and protecting His faithful ones is the work of God *alone*. The same meaning appears in lxxii. 18, 'Who only doeth wondrous things'; and in cxxxvi. 4, 'To Him who alone doeth great wonders' (cf. the phrase of the Prayer-Book, 'Who alone worketh great marvels'). Even more emphatic is lxxxiii. 18, 'That they may know that Thou ALONE, whose name is Jehovah, art the Most High over all the earth.' Surely a consideration of these passages sheds light upon the sense in which the Psalmist used the phrase so much cavilled at, 'Against

Thee, Thee only, have I sinned.' In relation to human sin—not human offences, which may be against a man's neighbour or against the welfare of the community—as in all supreme rule and order, God shares His position with none. Sin is offence against Him alone. So with regard to righteousness, God's exhibition of this quality stands solemnly and gloriously alone (Ps. lxxi. 16).

Space will not permit of our further illustrating this point from the 62nd Psalm, which has been called the 'only' psalm, because within its short compass is repeated six times a particle translated 'only.' The word 'only' by no means renders the suggestive Hebrew  $\text{יְחִידָא}$ , which cannot be translated by a single English equivalent. To read the psalm carefully will furnish a better commentary upon our present text than any we could give. 'My soul waiteth *only* upon God; He *only* is my rock, and my salvation.' Whereas the wicked are anxious *only* to thrust down the righteous from his position of deserved honour, the righteous is bidden to wait *only* upon Him, to be silent, that His voice alone may be heard. This is enough for the devout spirit; for if God ALONE be rock and refuge, he who shelters under that sublime protection shall never be moved. If the severe expositor be disposed to say that too much is thus made of a particle, not necessarily implying uniqueness, the reply is ready that the feature of the psalmists' religion now insisted upon does not depend upon the use of a single particle, significant as that is, but is a notable feature of the religious life portrayed in the whole Psalter.

The subject will meet us again in a further study of the characteristics of the psalmists' God, to be undertaken in our next paper.

## The Expository Times Guild of Bible Study.

THE new session of 'The Expository Times Guild of Bible Study' is now commenced. We have chosen the Books of Haggai and Malachi for the Old Testament, and the remainder of the Acts of the Apostles (xiii.—xxviii.) for the New. This completes in each case not merely a portion of Scripture, but a period of Sacred History.

The sole condition of membership in 'The Expository Times Guild' is the promise to study

one or both of the appointed portions of Scripture between the months of November and June. That promise is made by the sending of the name and address (clearly written, with degrees, etc.) to the Editor of THE EXPOSITORY TIMES, at Kinneff, Bervie, N.B. There is no fee, and the promise does not bind anyone who, through unforeseen circumstances, finds it impossible to carry it out.

The aim of 'The Expository Times Guild' is

the study, as distinguished from the mere reading, of Scripture. Some commentary is therefore recommended as a guide, though the dictionary and concordance will serve. Recent commentaries on Haggai and Malachi are not so numerous as on Zechariah. But Orelli's *Minor Prophets* (10s. 6d.) could scarcely be excelled for more advanced study, while Dods' *Haggai, Zechariah, and Malachi* (2s.) is more easily mastered and extremely useful. Archdeacon Perowne has a volume on the same prophets in the *Cambridge Bible for Schools and Colleges* (3s. 6d.), and *Malachi* may be had alone (1s.).

Messrs. T. & T. Clark, Edinburgh, have again kindly agreed to send a copy of Orelli direct to any *Member of The Expository Times Guild* on receipt of six shillings.

For the study of the Acts, nothing new has appeared since last year. We may, therefore, again mention Dr. Lumby's volume in the Cambridge Bible (4s. 6d.), and Professor Lindsay's in the Bible Handbook Series, which is conveniently issued in two parts (Acts i.-xii. and xiii. to end, 1s. 6d. each), and is surprisingly cheap. For those who are ready to work on a Greek text, nothing can surpass Mr. Page's little book (Macmillans, 3s. 6d.).<sup>1</sup>

As the study of these portions of Scripture advances, short expository papers may be sent to the Editor. The best of them will be published in THE EXPOSITORY TIMES, and the writers, seeing them there, may send to the publishers for the work they select out of a list which will be given.

During the past session fewer papers than usual have been published. This is owing, not to any lack of papers or of ability in them, but to their length. Again and again, papers have had to be rejected which would certainly have appeared had they been half their present length. We must recognise the fact, however, that some subjects cannot be adequately discussed within the limits we have to prescribe. We wish, therefore, this session to offer, in addition to the books sent for published papers, ten volumes for the best unpublished papers received during the session which exceed two columns of THE EXPOSITORY TIMES in length. And inasmuch as many of the members of the Guild are laymen or ladies, five of the volumes will be reserved for them. The

<sup>1</sup> A new edition in English at 2s. 6d. is recently published.

result will be published in the issue for August or September.

The following new members are enrolled this month:—

- Rev. Granville Sharp, M.A. (Oxon.), Clifton.  
 Mrs. Annie T. Sharp, 46 Wellington Park, Clifton.  
 Rev. William Cowan, M.A., Free Church Manse, Banchory.  
 Mrs. Cowan, Free Church Manse, Banchory.  
 Mr. Ernest E. Hoole, 40 Whittaker Lane, Prestwich.  
 Rev. Edward Hicks, D.D., D.C.L., Vicar of St. Stephen's, Sheffield.  
 Rev. Thomas Hind, Wesleyan Minister, Epworth Lodge, Rhyl.  
 Rev. William Reed, M.A. (Cantab.), The Hermitage, Southsea, Hants.  
 Rev. J. E. Gray, Croft House, Lynton.  
 Rev. F. T. Astbury, Alford House, Lynton.  
 Rev. W. H. Crompton, B.A., Broughton-in-Furness.  
 Rev. J. A. Anderson, M.A., 8 Yanbrugh Park Road, E., Blackheath, London.  
 Rev. J. L. M'Gregor, M.A., Berwick-on-Tweed.  
 Rev. Alexander Tomory, M.A., Duff College, Calcutta.  
 Rev. W. Talbot Hindley, M.A., Meads Vicarage, Eastbourne.  
 Rev. James Richards, Calvinistic Methodist Minister, Llanfyllin, Montgomeryshire.  
 Mr. Arthur B. Coomb, Headmaster, Wesleyan School, Truro.  
 Mr. George W. Evison, 104 Spring Bank, Hull.  
 Rev. Philip F. Yarker, 22 Thornhill Place, Thornbury, Bradford.  
 Mr. William M. Burnett, Elswick Library, Newcastle-on-Tyne.  
 Rev. John E. Parsonson, Wesleyan Parsonage, Cradock, Cape Colony.  
 Mr. S. Clement Ryley, Thrapston, Northamptonshire.  
 Rev. John King, M.A., United Presbyterian Manse, Alva.  
 Rev. James Moffatt, M.A., B.D., Glasgow.  
 Rev. H. Ceoryw Williams, Baptist Minister, Corwen, North Wales.  
 Mr. Lewis T. Harry, 117 Chester Road, Kidderminster.  
 Rev. G. E. Phillips, M.A., Southlands, Sandown, Isle of Wight.

Rev. S. Gault, LL.B., The Manse, M'Kelvey's Grove, Castleblayney, Ireland.

Rev. T. M. Reed, Loughor, Swansea, Glamorgan-shire.

Rev. J. M. Pollock, LL.D., Ph.D., F.E.I.S., Vicar of Cundall with Norton-le-Clay.

Mr. James Croskery, M.A., Castlerock, Co. Londonderry, Ireland.

## Archaeological Commentary on the Book of Genesis.

BY PROFESSOR THE REV. A. H. SAYCE, LL.D., OXFORD.

IN the following articles I propose to illustrate and explain the Book of Genesis by means of those archæological discoveries and researches which have been made of late years in Bible lands. Of philological and critical commentaries on the Pentateuch there are more than enough, of archæological commentaries there are still but few. The materials are recent and imperfect, the workers in the archæological field are but a small band, and fresh discoveries are being made in it almost every day. These are the chief reasons which have hitherto made students of the Old Testament reluctant to undertake a systematic treatment of its text from a purely archæological point of view, and they are sufficient to make any exhaustive treatment of it impossible for many years to come. All we can do at present is to see what light is thrown upon the words and narratives of Scripture by such archæological facts as we already know. Anything, therefore, like an exhaustive examination of the Book of Genesis, verse by verse, must not be looked for in the articles that follow: all I can endeavour to do is to select the most salient points, and indicate the passages and statements which have been illustrated or confirmed by Oriental archæology.

GEN. I.—II. 3. The account of the Creation in days, with which the Book of Genesis begins, forms a complete whole. A parallel to it has been discovered among the cuneiform literature of Assyria. George Smith found certain broken tablets from the library of Nineveh which contained part of an epic poem describing the creation of the world. Other tablets belonging to the poem have since been found, and a considerable part of the Assyrian Epic of the Creation is accordingly now in our hands. Like Assyrian literature generally, it had a Babylonian source. In the earliest days of

Babylonian history various legends were current to account for the origin of the universe, and the priestly schools had formed out of them more than one cosmological system. Some of these have been preserved to us, at all events in part. The Epic of the Creation combines certain of these legends and philosophic systems into a single whole, and presents us with an account, half mythological, half philosophical, of the way in which the present order of things came into existence. Of the date of the poem we know nothing, except that it must be older than the seventh century B.C., when the copy of it which we possess was made for the library of Nineveh. Most Assyriologists believe that it belongs to the same period as that in which the other great Epics of Babylonia originated—that is to say, to the epoch of Khammurabi in the twenty-third century B.C. At anyrate, the materials and ideas which it embodies go back to a great antiquity.

The poem begins as follows:—

When on high the heavens were named not,  
(and) earth beneath had received no name,  
then the abyss of waters was in the beginning their  
generator,  
the chaos of the Deep (Tiamat) was one who bore  
them all.

Their waters were embosomed together, and  
the field was uncultivated, the marsh (-plant) un-  
grown.

When the gods had not appeared, any one of them,  
no name had they received, no destiny [had they  
fixed].

Then were the [great] gods created,  
Lakmu and Lakhamu issued forth [the first];  
until they grew up [and waxed old],  
when An-sar and Ki-sar (the Upper and Lower  
Firmament) were created.

Long were the days [until]  
Anu, [Bel and Ea were created:]  
An-sar [and Ki-sar created them.]

Here the tablet is broken, and as the second