

Studies in the Diction of the Psalter

Fourth Article

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IF the method of analysis followed in the first three articles in this series has validity, it evidently should be still further extended, particularly with the hope of bringing to light some of the minor strains of expression that are found in the Psalter. The purpose of the present article is to indicate two of these natural extensions of the method.

Psalm 119 stands out in the Psalter as not only the longest and the most rigidly artificial of the poems (as to form), but as somewhat singular in contents and spirit. It is an elaborate acrostic, made up of eight-line strophes, each line within a strophe beginning with the same letter, and the strophes following each other till all the letters of the alphabet have been used ($22 \times 8 = 176$ lines or "verses"). As is generally known, there is also a fairly sustained effort to repeat certain terms at approximately equal intervals throughout the poem, the cycle of repetition usually corresponding to the strophes. Almost every line contains some term like "word", "law", "commandment" and the like, all being expressions referring to the authoritative revelation of God's will for the practical guidance of His "servants" in "the way" of right belief and conduct. The poem, then, is an extraordinary proclamation of loyalty to the Word of God, probably as set forth in Scriptures.

The prevailing tone is that of orthodoxy, absolutely certain of the rightness of its views, and strenuous in asserting and defending them. Through it runs, also, a vein of complaint over the malice and hostility of opponents. This latter has much similarity with the plaintiveness of the D poems (see second article), but seems not to be organically the same. In D there is no such constant exaltation of "the Law" or

any particular literary deposit, and the complaints there are more specifically social in character. The speaker in 119 is apparently an individual, though we cannot help supposing that he represents a class. If so, it suggests the group of literalists among whom typical Rabbinism was developed, though this poem is not as jejune and fantastic as mature Rabbinism often was.

The formal regularity of the poem practically forces us to consider it a literary unit, though in an acrostic it is always possible that there are materials incorporated that antedate the time of final composition. In this case, however, there is no reason for emphasizing this qualification.

In view of the peculiar character and form of this poem, with its remarkable length (1064 words, or about 5.6% of the whole Psalter), we may well use it as a means of testing whether lexically it represents a considerable strain of sentiment and utterance running through the total collection.

For this purpose we follow the same method as in our previous studies. We first inquire which of the "common" or "moderately rare" words in the Psalter vocabulary show a decided "preference" for this poem. The following list includes 35 "common" words, 10% or more of all whose occurrences are in 119, 25 "moderately rare" words, 20% or more of whose occurrences are there, and 2 "rare" words that are extraordinarily characteristic of 119:

Test-List Derived from 119.							
אבר	12	זר	75	משפט	35	פחד	20
אהב	21	זהב	26	נבט	13	פקוד	88
אור v.	13	חיה	53	נחם	25	צדק	25
אמונה	23	חק	70	גטה	14	צוה	13
אמרה	73	חרפה	10	נצר	42	קרב	25
אמת	11	יחל	32	סור	23	רדף	25
אני	13	יריה	25	עבר	26	שוש	29
ארה	33	כלה	18	ערה	74	שיח	43
קנר	20	כן adv.	14	עדות	69	שר	22
בוש	18	כף	10	עזב	14	שכח	28
בין	40	לב	14	קור	18	שמר	30
רבק	25	למד	50	ענה I.	10	שקר	38
דבר	36	מאר	26	ענה II.	29	תורה	69
דרדף	20	מען	18	קני	30	תמיד	13
הרש	21	מצא	11	עשק	33		
היא	29	מצוה	85	פה	11		

In each case the figures indicate the percentage of the word's occurrences in 119 compared with its total occurrences in the Psalter.

These 67 words together occur about 480 times in 119, being 45% of its total text. In the whole Psalter they occur about 1665 times, being nearly 9% of its text.

For the most part this list differs from those previously noted. It includes from the L list (1918, p. 92) חיה, משפט, עזר, ענה, I; from the D list (1918, p. 161) אבר, בוש, אבר, לב, מן, עוב, ענה, I, ענה, רדף, ענה; from the E list (1914, p. 2) אור, חרפה, אור, בן, ענה, ענה. Evidently, then, it points toward a distinct usage of thought and expression.

For convenience, this list will be called P.

Assuming that these words offer a clue to a particular strain or style of writing in the Psalter, we inquire next as to their distribution among the several poems. If 119 is a striking example of a special type, what other poems are lexically most like it? This question is brought in at this point (as heretofore in these Studies), before noting what usages of the words are most characteristic of 119, simply that the statement may be as little affected as possible by whatever subjective opinions are brought into play in determining what the characteristic usages are. To save space, only the extreme parts of the full summary are given, namely, those poems in which these words are relatively many, and those in which they are few or wanting:

	I.	II.	III.	IV.	V.
(Many)	25	—	—	—	—
	17, 19	—	—	—	143
	1	71	—	—	130
	9, 13	—	86	97	—
	27, 31, 39	45, 70	—	105	121, 125
	10, 33, 37, 38	69	—	99	116, 141
	6, 34, 40	—	—	101	111, 112, 127, 138, 142, 146
(Few)	3	43, 62, 66	—	96, 106	—
	24	60, 68	87	100	118, 115, 126, 149
	—	—	—	95, 104	136
(None)	29	—	—	—	114, 124, 150

Note that all the alphabetic poems have many of these words, except 145; as a group, they are much stronger than any other. Next, as groups, come D¹, D², the "royal" poems, K¹, E, D², A, K². Of the longer historical poems, 105 alone has many, while 106 has few. The only "royal" poem that is strong is 45, which is also the only strong poem in K.

Note, also, that if we consider the sections of the most divisible poems, several of these sections would appear above. Thus (using

the sections as in 1913, p. 103) decidedly strong sections are 18c, 19b, 22ab, 27b, 28b, 36a, 44b, 50b, 89acd, 90b, 102ac, 109b, 144a. Sections with none of these words are 18a, 60ac, 144b.

The poems and parts of poems here counted as strong constitute about one-half of Bk. I; less than one-quarter of Bk. II; less than one-eighth of Bk. III; somewhat over one-quarter of Bk. IV; over one-fifth of Bk. V (exclusive of 119 itself). The strength of Bk. I is extremely noticeable.

The next step is to observe that most of the words in the test-list appear in 119 only in certain specific senses, which need now to be isolated. Below is a concise summary, grouping the words in a simple classification, which in most cases indicates the meaning emphasized, and stating the number of times this meaning occurs both in 119 and in other poems (thus "25/10" means that the word in the preferred meaning occurs 25 times in 119 and 10 times in non-119):

The outstanding feature of 119 is the constant repetition of terms for God's thought or will as set forth in formal, literary ways. The identification of Yahweh with "the Law" is close, references to His attributes or actions being mingled with expressions about revealed truth without much distinction. Seven terms recur with studied regularity in almost every strophe, namely, *תורה*, 25/10; *דבר*, 23,23; *מצוה*, 22/4; *משפט*, 21/34; *חק*, 21/8; *פקד*, 21/3; *אמרה*, 19/8—all but the last being similarly common in Deut.¹ With these stand *עדה*, 16/5; *ערוה*, 9/4; *דרך*, 7/24; *ארה*, 1/5; *פה*, 3/4; and also *צדק*, 11/23; *אמונה*, 5/17; *אמת*, 4/29. Verbs of God's action, often in direct relation to His "word", include *חיה*, 16/12; *למד*, 12/10; *ירה*, "teach", 2/5; *עור*, 3/11; *נחם*, 3/5; *ענה* I, 2/34; *צה*, 2/9; *אר*, 2/9; *עוב*, 1/12. Taken together, these occurrences foot up 249/306. If they were relatively as frequent elsewhere as in 119, they would appear at least 4500 times in non-119.

Correlative with these are many terms referring to the speaker as he regards divine truth or the righteous "way" of conduct deducible from it. These are largely verbs—*שמר*, 21/12; *אהב*, 12/6; *בין*, 10/10; *נצר*, 10/3; *שכה* (usually negative), 9/9; *יחל*, 6/13; *שיח*, 6/7; *דרש*, 5/12; *נבט*, 2/1; *בוש*, 5/10; *נמה*, 4/3; *סוד*, 3/10; *כלה* (in desire), 3/6; *דבק*, 2/2; *עוב* (negative), 2/1; *שונש*, 2/4; *ענה*, "sing", 1/1; *מוד*, 1/4; *קרב*, 1/1; but also such nouns as *עבר*, 13/28; *דרך*, 5/12; *ארה*, 4/0; *לב*, 13/60; *פה*, 4/22; *כף*, 2/7; and the adverb of constancy, *תמיד*, 2/14. Interwoven with these are words referring to the opponents and evils by which the devout are assailed—*שקר*, 8/12; *זר*, 6/2; *רדף*, 5/9; *ענה* II, 4/10; *עני*, 3/7; *חריפה* (subjective), 2/12; *שר*, 2/7; *עשק*, 2/4; *אבד*, 2/3; *בגר*, 1/4; *קרב* (of

¹ Briggs also counts *עדה* in this series.

hostility), 1/1. These occurrences foot up 184/328. If these usages were as frequent elsewhere as in 119, they would appear about 3300 times in non-119.

A few usages may be added that may be stylistic—*והב* (in simile), 2/1; *על-כן* or *לכן*, 5/13; *ע-מאד*, 4/2; *בטן*, illative, 4/10. *אני* is frequent (11 times), but without distinctive usage; this, with *היא* and *נצח* (use undistinctive), is omitted from reckoning.

The sum of all these usages is 448/690; they form nearly 42% of 119, being proportionally more than ten times as frequent there as in the rest of the Psalter.

When these preferred usages are traced in non-119, they point to the following poems as lexically the nearest relatives of 119: 1, 7, 9, 13, 19, 25, 27, 33, 34, 37, 40; 44, 54, 69, 70, 71; 85, 86; 99, 101, 105; 111, 117, 130, 131, 138, 143, 147. They are but slightly found in 2, 3, 5, 6, 10, 11, 21, 24, 41; 46, 49, 52, 55, 59, 60, 62, 65, 68; 76, 79, 80, 84; 90, 92, 93, 95, 96, 100, 106; 107, 110, 113, 115, 116, 122, 126, 127, 128, 135, 139, 144. They are wholly absent from 8, 15, 29; 47, 58; 74, 75, 83, 87; 104; 114, 121, 123, 124, 129, 136, 137, 140, 150.

As regards groups of poems, the alphabetic group is by far the strongest (except 145), with D¹ and D³, while A and K¹ are the weakest. As regards sections of poems, these words are found in 18 almost wholly in cd, in 19 wholly in b, in 22 one-half in a, in 27 mostly in b, in 28 wholly in b, in 90 wholly in b, in 109 mostly in b, and in 144 wholly in a.

So far as these lexical data go, it is evident that 119 has a singularly slight connection with the E element in the Psalter, but is closely related to D (so far as not included in E). The intertwining is so intimate as to raise the question whether P is not a special expansion of the characteristic sentiments of D.

There are two obvious objections to this identification. In D there is no frequent reference to "the Law" or what it stands for, except in poems that may be merely included in the total D collection without properly belonging to it. And in D generally the emphasis falls on the speaker's distress, with his acute sense of injustice and his passionate desire for relief (or vengeance), while in P it falls on his delight and confidence in communion with God through His word, an experience that pushes the sense of distress into the background.

In view of the apparent connection in texture between all the alphabetic poems (except 145) and of their difference as

a class from the D material in which several of them are imbedded, it is natural to infer that P represents either an earlier or a later stage of expression than D, but in either case a stage rather vitally connected with that of D. If P is earlier, then 9-10, 25, 34, 37 are vestiges of a style no longer dominant. If P is later, then these poems are interpolations in the D series. Considering the occurrence in Bk. V of 111, 112, 119, 145, the latter hypothesis is the simpler. In any case P illustrates the spirit of the synagogue rather than that of the Temple.

There are several other groups or series of poems that might be subjected to the same analysis as the foregoing, and the results are not without interest. But, rather than prolong the present discussion further, we shall content ourselves here with but one more special problem, namely, that of the so-called "royal" poems.

The "royal" group derives its name from the fact that in most of them the word "king" is used in a special sense; with this word "David" or "anointed" (משיח) is often associated, so that these also are used as means of identification. The poems usually counted in the group are rather curiously distributed—2, 18, 20, 21 in Bk. I; 45, 61, 63, 72 in Bk. II; 89 in Bk. III; 110, 132 in Bk. V. They have considerable differences among themselves, and yet they are also connected by marked resemblances in many details, so that it is not strange that they are usually thought to have had some common origin, or, at least, to represent a particular tendency of thought.

If a test-list is prepared of the words that show a preference for these poems, it proves to have some interest, especially as it brings into view about 30 words that have not occurred in the lists already presented. But, on the whole, the list seems hardly worth dwelling upon at length, since its implications are not so clear as those of other lists.

Using the list as a guide, we should find that the only poems, outside of the group, that are very strong in the words of the list are 144 (related to 18), 149; besides these, 8, 12, 13, 16, 24, 28, 46, 47, 48, 75, 93, 95, 97, 127, 128, 138, 145 are somewhat strong. On the

other hand, 19, 23, 38, 40, 55, 58, 70, 82, 104, 124, 142 are very weak, and 117, 129, 133 are barren. Among sections of poems, 27a, 29a, 36b, 90a are strong.

More useful results appear if we attack the problem in a different way. The crucial question is as to the force of the words "king", "David" and "anointed". But this can be approached only after some more general points have been touched upon.

There is some reason for connecting the group with the "David" series, either because the poems bear a "David" title or stand near to those that have such title.

Of the eleven poems, six are assigned to "David" (18, 20, 21, 61, 63, 110). Note, also, that 2 stands just before the long D series of Bk. I and may in some way belong to it (as hinted by some readings of Acts 13:33); that 72 stands close to the end of the D series in Bk. II and is followed by the remarkable colophon which closes that Book; and that 182 stands between two poems with "David" titles.

More important than this is the position of several of the poems. Two of them (72, 89) stand at the end of "books" in the completed Psalter, and both of these bear peculiar titles. If Bks. II-III were built up gradually, the presumption is that their final poems are comparatively late. As already noted, 2 appears to be in some way prefatory to the series that follows, and so, like 1, may well be later than that to which it is prefixed. 110 is the last of a small group of "David" poems in Bk. IV (108-110). 132, with 133, 134, which are linked with it by peculiar references to the priestly office (not found in preceding poems), is one of the last of the so-called "Songs of Ascents".

In the light of these phenomena, the location of 18, 20, 21, together with 19 (which, in its present form, seems to be late), opens up the question whether Bk. I may perhaps be made up of more than one division, so that these four poems may be addenda to a series that was once distinct from what follows. Some such stratification in Bk. I is hinted at by other facts—which, however, cannot well be taken up here.

Still more important, again, is the question whether any of the poems are composite. The longer ones (18, 89) are certainly made up of highly diverse sections, and in several

other cases there are peculiar details of rhetorical arrangement. If it were true in any cases that the verses containing "royal" references are not of the same texture as the rest of the poems in which they are found, it might have important bearings on their interpretation. At all events, each poem requires adequate scrutiny before being accepted entire into the "royal" list. Connected with this question is that of discovering any poems or passages outside of the usual "royal" list that present such similarities as presumably to be reckoned with that list. The determination of such additional materials may not be easy; but an effort in this direction should be made, if there is any likelihood of its yielding results. This critical survey of the field may seem superfluous in view of the very extensive literature on the subject. Yet the relation of the facts to the general line of argument in these Studies seems to warrant some reëxamination of the evidence.

For convenience, we shall take up the critical terms first, allowing the questions thus far suggested to develop in the process of the discussion.

Regarding the term "David" the question is whether it is used literally, of the personal David, as in Sam., Kgs. and Chr., or in some figurative sense, as seems to be the case in a few passages in the Prophets, as well as, presumably, in the Psalter titles. All of the Psalter references appear to depend upon II Sam. 7, and the natural inference from their form and context is that they all have the personal David in view more or less definitely. It may be, however, that the name "David" brings with it some degree of typical force, due to the fact that the historical narratives, being accepted as "Scripture", had acquired such a force as wholes. But of this we cannot be sure. It is simpler to assume that in the Psalter "David" always means the historical person.

"David" occurs 12 times—18:51; 78:70; 89:4, 21, 36, 50; 122:5; 132:1, 10, 11, 17; 144:10. In 5 of these there is also the epithet "servant". The Davidic line, under the terms "seed", "house" or "fruit of the body", is specified in 5 cases. Of the three references outside the "royal" list, note that 144:10 probably depends on 18:51, though it has a very different form; that 78:70 may have a close

relation to 89, as will be discussed at a later point; and that 122:5 may be related to 132.

Considering the emphasis upon David in the longer historical books, it is somewhat remarkable how few are the references to him elsewhere. *Ezr.* and *Neh.* have some topographical and liturgical allusions like those of *Chr.* (see also *Cant.* 4:4; *Am.* 6:5). The "city" or "tent" of David is mentioned in *Is.* 16:5; 22:9; 29:1; *Am.* 9:11. The Davidic "house" or "throne" occurs 4 times in *Is.*, 8 times in *Jer.*, 5 times in *Zech.* The epithet "servant" is found in *Jer.* 33 and *Ezk.* 34 and 37. A figurative sense seems necessary in *Is.* 55:3; *Jer.* 23:5; 30:9; 33:15; *Ezk.* 34:23, 25; *Hos.* 8:5. "David" in these represents an ideal conception—either the kingly office in the abstract, or the theocratic genius of Israel as a nation. Of these ideal conceptions there is no certain trace in the Psalter in connection with the name "David".

Regarding the term "anointed" the question is whether it is used individually, of David or some other person, or collectively, of Israel as containing the Davidic line and inheriting the Davidic promises. Since in *Sam.* it is frequently used of Saul and David (and in *Is.* 45 of Cyrus), it is natural to expect that in the Psalter it will be applied to an individual; and as in the Psalter it usually occurs in connection with "David" or "the king", it is also natural to assume that it is a synonym for one or both of these. There is reason, however, for doubting its equivalence with "David", and, if it is equivalent to "the king", it does not follow that its force must be individual. The trend of the evidence seems to be in favor of a collective meaning, being a name adopted by the nation or its more devout representatives.

"Anointed" occurs in the singular 9 times—2:2; 18:51; 20:7; 28:8; 84:10; 89:39, 52; 132:10, 17; and in the plural once—105:15, of Israel as a whole. In 132:10, "For Thy servant David's sake turn not away the face of Thine anointed", it is clear that a distinction is made between "David" and the "anointed" (cf. *II Chr.* 6:42); and probably a similar distinction underlies 132:17. So in 89:39, 52 the whole point of the argument depends upon assuming that the speaker, who seems to identify himself with the "anointed", is looking back to David as wholly distinct from himself and far removed from his times. In 2, 20, 28, 84 "anointed" is very closely connected with plurals in the context, thus implying that it is collective. In 18:51 all the three critical words occur together; here "king" and "anointed" are in parallel, and the two seem to be

synonymous with the collective phrase "David and his seed" (i. e., Israel).

Verbs of "anointing" occur in 2:6; 23:5; 45:8; 89:21; 92:11. In 89 the reference is to the personal David. In 2 and 45 the interpretation depends upon that of "the king". In 23 and 92 the allusion may be merely to festal customs; but, on the other hand, both poems may be interpreted collectively (92 can hardly be taken otherwise).

"Anointed" is very rare except in Sam. and Pss.—only in Lev. 4:3, 5, 16; 6:22 (all of priests); Is. 45:1 (of Cyrus); I Sam. 2:10, 35; Lam. 4:20; Hab. 3:13 (in all four cases almost certainly of Israel).

Regarding the term "king" three different interpretations are possible. First, it may refer to an actual, historic individual who was officially in power, as before the Exile, or during the Maccabean period, or, just possibly, at an intermediate time, when some leader appealed to the national imagination. Second, it may refer to an ideal, future personage, conceived as embodying and fulfilling the "Messianic" hope. Third, it may refer to the nation as a whole, regarded as in some way set apart by God to be a leader among the nations of the world. The first would be analogous to the usage of "David" in the Psalter; the third would be analogous to the usage of "anointed"; the second would have analogies with both usages at once. Which of the three is chosen must depend upon a minute scrutiny of the poems, including not only a study of the expressions directly connected with "the king", but also some consideration of the probable integrity of the poems as they come to us.

"The king", in the singular and absolutely, and not applied to God, occurs 15-16 times—2:6; 18:51; 21:2, 8; 33:16; 45:2, 6, 12, 14, 15, 16; 61:7; 63:12; 72:1 (bis); 89:19?; with two cases in which the reference probably is to God—20:10; 99:4. (The references to God as King, which are not here considered, are 5:3; 10:16; 14:7-10; 29:10; 44:5; 47:3, 7, 8; 48:3; 68:25; 74:12; 84:4; 95:3; 98:6; 145:1; 149:2.)

Rulership is predicated of "the king" in 72:2, 4; 110:6; and various insignia are named, such as "throne" in 45:7?; 89:5, 30, 37, 45; 132:11, 12; "crown" in 21:4; 89:40; 132:18; "scepter" or "rod" in 2:9; 45:7; 110:2; and the figurative "horn" in 89:18, 25; 132:17. "Kingdom" occurs in 45:7. These words suggest links with 92, 122, etc. Most or all of them are also often applied to God,

thus strengthening the view that "the king" tends to be invested with divine attributes. Such attributes are conspicuous in 45 and 72 (links with 8, 84, 112, etc.)

Before looking at the poems one by one we may remark that they consist of four or five rhetorical forms of expression, namely, (a) Description, the statement of objective facts without reference by the writer to himself; (b) Personation, in which God, "the king" or others are represented as speaking (this being really a subdivision under the preceding); (c) Experience, in which the writer describes events or feelings as directly concerning himself; (d) Address, in which the writer speaks vocatively to a hearer, as to "the king" or others; (e) Prayer or Praise, in which God is thus addressed. All these rhetorical forms are common throughout the Psalter, but in the "royal" poems the relatively large amount of Personation and Address often gives them a marked dramatical force, while the strongly descriptive tone also allies them with the historical and narrative poems generally.

The dramatic citation of the words of God in 2, 89, 110, 132 calls attention to the fact that the number of such passages in the Psalter is not large, and that there are curious links between those that occur, suggesting that they represent somehow a common literary tradition. Setting aside the brief phrases of 27:8; 35:3; 87:6; 90:3, with the obscure passages in 32 and 60 = 106, every one of the remaining cases (12:6; 46:11; 50:5-23; 68:23-24; 75:3-4; 81:7-17; 91:14-16; 95:8-11; 105:11, 15) has some feature or quality that reminds us of expressions in the "royal" poems. Without taking space to discuss these at length, note especially the closing section of 91, which seems almost like a fragment of a "royal" poem. In general, the evident direction or application of these divine declarations, which is regularly to Israel as a nation, may have significance as to how "the king" is to be understood.

We may well take up first the two longer poems, 18 and 89, both of which contain sections that do not seem entirely homogeneous, although welded into an apparent unity. In both of these the word "king" occurs but once, but in 18 it is possible that its implicit force pervades at least half of the poem, if not the whole; in 89 it is certain that two-thirds of the poem are concerned with topics in the "royal" circle. Both of these poems have much critical importance, 18 because

it appears both in the Psalter and in the appendix to II Sam., and 89 because of its probable relation to the historical poems generally. Yet neither of them is likely to be selected as the most typical of the "royal" series, since as wholes they are not as vivid in characterization as some others. This very fact, however, may increase their value as evidence regarding the inherent nature of the conceptions that underlie the "royal" cycle.

In 18, "king" occurs only in v. 51, in parallel with "anointed", and the two in apposition with "David and his seed", both being linked with Yahweh by a possessive (cf. 2:6). This being a final verse and following a highly liturgical verse (introduced by לְפָנָיו), which much resembles closing antiphons in 7, 21, 30, 45, 52, &c., we naturally inquire whether both verses belong with what precedes, or but one of them, or neither of them.

We shall assume that the two verses cannot well be separated from each other, though they may not have had exactly the same origin. The probability is that they were not originally parts of the preceding poem. If not, however, they were added as in some effective way completing the preceding thought. Instead of interpreting the whole poem by means of these concluding verses, the only safe exegesis is to interpret them by means of the sense of the poem as it stands without them. Furthermore, with them is to be associated the opening of the poem (vv. 2-3 or 2-4), which has the same lexical texture as v. 50—a texture not found anywhere in the body of the poem.

The main poem, without its present introduction and conclusion, consists of at least three large sections, (a) vv. 4-20, recounting an experience of distress which was the occasion of a signal divine intervention, depicted under the figure of a theophany; (b) vv. 21-27, asserting that this intervention was occasioned by the essential worth or merit of the speaker; (c) vv. 28-49, declaring, on the one hand, the speaker's confidence in God's support, and, on the other, his complete triumph over opponents. The entire poem is cast in the first person singular, except for two slight touches (vv. 28, 32), but with one long piece of objective description (vv. 8-16, with v. 31). The question is as to whether "I" is a literal individual or in some degree collective. The analogy of Hab. 3, with various passages in the Psalter, indicates that the theophany passage refers to Israel, its germ being the memory of the Exodus. Similarly, the almost unconscious references in vv. 28 and 32 to "the afflicted people" and "our God", and the more positive claims of general supremacy in vv. 44-46, 48, with the general analogy of some equally militant passages in other poems, favor the presumption that the third section

is much more national than individual. With this it is easy to harmonize the middle section, which, by itself, is open to either a personal or a national interpretation. But this middle section bears clear marks of the style specially represented in the Psalter by 119, a style relatively late and associated with the orthodoxy of the class that regarded itself as the true Israel. The completed poem cannot be earlier than the period of this section, and its unifying thought cannot have been originally other than that of its several constituent parts. Hence we conclude that the whole was originally national in general intention. It may even have been once expressed in the plural number. But its adaptation to the story of David was easy, and thus it could be appended to II Sam.

If, now, we note the parallellism in v. 51 of "anointed" and "king", the interlocking of vv. 50-51, and the touch of indefinite perpetuity at the close, the conclusion is natural that "king" here means Israel.

In 89, "king" occurs only in v. 19, in an ambiguous construction. If, with "shield", it is an epithet of Yahweh, the passage falls outside of our present discussion. If, as probably ordinary usage would suggest, it means that both "shield" and "king" "belong to" Yahweh, then the question is as to the connection and meaning. For myself, though admitting that the line would naturally be read in the latter way, I cannot help querying whether the sense is not, "For to Yahweh belongs *the title* our Shield, and to the Holy One of Israel *the title* our King", simply because this seems to be more analogous to various similar passages in which these epithets are thus applied. I do not think that the contention is well founded that "shield" is a metaphor for "king", in spite of the inferences often drawn from 47:10; 84:10. However, since many critics are positive that "king" here does *not* refer to God, we will assume their point of view far enough to see to what it may lead.

The poem as a whole obviously divides into three sections: (a) vv. 2-3, 6-15 (or 6-19), a rather general tribute of praise to Yahweh the Almighty; (b) vv. 20-37, with 4-5, a striking amplification of II Sam. 7—the covenant with David as set forth by Nathan; (c) vv. 39-52, a vehement protest that this covenant has been broken in later times. These sections differ in texture. The first and second are further distinguished by a change of meter, as well as of topic and diction. Certain features in the second section provoke the question whether this may not be essentially a prolongation of the historic poem 78. That poem breaks off abruptly. This takes up the story at exactly the point there reached, and opens with a "then" which implies that there was some antecedent narrative. If this section is in any way to be associated with the historical poems, then it appears here as a sort of text or theme, upon which the

third section proceeds to dilate in accordance with the contradictory situation in which the writer finds himself—a situation that almost certainly belongs to the Exile.

Does v. 19 belong with the first section or with the second, or is it, perchance, part of a harmonizing inset connecting the two? For us here the question is important only if answered in favor of the second or third alternatives. Even then we may doubt whether "our king" means much more than "rulership among us". (We may note, by the way, that the possessive "our", with "king", is common only in address to God; of human rulers it occurs only in I Sam. 8:20; II Sam. 19:44; Hos. 7:5.)

In the light of these considerations, we may safely say that 89 does not give much positive help about the meaning of "king" in other poems.

The three other poems (2, 61, 63) in which "king" occurs but once are somewhat more illuminating. Yet in two of them there is some uncertainty whether the present text is not composite. Even if we do not allow the possibility of this, we can hardly be sure that an individual is meant. Rather, on the whole, close analysis favors a collective, national interpretation. Of the three, 2 is the most significant.

In 63, "king" occurs only in v. 12, in a phrase that is in a way curiously incidental, though also necessary to complete the total thought. The poem's topic is an intense longing after God, with memories of blessing received and worship rendered—all beautifully expressed in vv. 2-9. With v. 10 a disturbing factor enters, the soul-foes, which is developed in vv. 10-12. This latter section may be a later addition to the poem, since, though it may explain the need or distress implied in the first section, it is not really necessary. Now, in this second section 12a comes in like a chance side-remark, or even an interpolation. It serves, however, to bring in the name of God, giving 12b something to rest upon—"whoso sweareth by Him (i. e., *God*) shall glory". If vv. 10-12 or v. 12 alone are an appendix, "the king" must stand for some general conception, like Israel personified or its devout members. And if they are not an appendix, but original, it is easier, in view of the shift in v. 11 to the objective form, to hold that "king" represents a collective notion, with which the speaker identifies himself, rather than that it is his self-applied title as an individual.

In 61, "king" occurs only in v. 7, introducing the one thought that his life is without end. It is not clear whether the reference is objective or subjective, but the latter view is the easier, since vv. 6 and 7 seem to be intimately connected. But in that case "king" seems to be immediately defined as the same as "the fearers

of Thy name", the true worshipers, of whom the speaker is one, so that the royal promises are his. This poem offers several verbal links with other "royal" poems, like "Rock", "end of the earth" (though not exactly like 2:8; 72:8), &c., but is peculiar in its reference to "vows"—a word mostly confined to Bk. II (elsewhere in 22:26; 116:14, 18). The implications of the usage of this word are favorable to the collective interpretation of this poem, namely, as the expression of the devout as a body.

In 2, "king" occurs only in v. 6, in what seems to be the utterance of "the Lord" (cf. 89, 110) regarding the institution of a ruler in Zion. The "king" here may be either an individual or the nation, since Zion is the seat of both. But v. 7 is ambiguous. "I will tell, &c." may be the words either of this "king" or of the poet (cf. 45:2, 18). Most critics assume the former, making this a case of strong dramatic personation. But this view is not necessary, and has difficulties. It is hard to find other clear instances in the Psalter of such sudden personation. The view is defensible only if we assume that the "king" was the poet. The placing of the poem and its style both suggest that it is relatively late. Hence an individualistic reading forces us to make it the work of a Maccabean prince. But the poet may also be one who conceives of *Israel* as the real inheritor of the promise, and who at the same time counts himself a part of the nation. His "I" and "me", as well as "king", would then be collective. We remember that his "anointed" in v. 2 seems to be collective, as usually in the Psalter, and that it is against this "anointed" that the angry plotting of "the nations" and their "rulers" is directed. This it is that justifies the bold expansion of the ancient promise in vv. 8-9, with the highly comminatory tone of vv. 9 and 12 (cf. 18:38-43; 21:9-13; &c.). Accordingly, we infer that here the "king" is Israel, in whose name the poet speaks.

We now come to the three poems (21, 45, 72) that seem to be fullest of deliberate characterization. In each of these "the king" is mentioned more than once, and his qualities are more or less emphasized in detail. Whether these, however, represent a view of his character and office that belongs with every other reference to him is not certain. All we can say is that here we have evidence of some elaboration of the "royal" conception, which either may have permeated it always or may have marked it at certain stages of development. The three poems have some obvious similarities, but they are also strikingly distinct.

In 21, "king" occurs in vv. 2 and 8, and the connection requires that its force be felt throughout vv. 2-8, if not as far as to v. 13.

It is possible that vv. 9-13 are addressed to Yahweh, since they contain expressions like those thus directed in other poems; but against this is v. 10bc. These verses show links with 2, just as the earlier section recalls 45. The whole makes a well-articulated exposition of a concept so definite to the poet's mind that he is at no pains to explain it fully. In all these regards it much resembles 45 and 72. But the militant tone is more that of 2 and parts of 18. Except for the assertion of perpetuity in vv. 5 and 7, there is no obvious reason in the poem why it may not be spoken about an individual. The argument for a collective, national interpretation rests chiefly upon analogy, though it is much strengthened by the fact that this poem, though mostly cast in the form of address to "the king", confines itself to statements that are notably lacking in sharp individual characterization.

In 45, "king" occurs repeatedly. This poem mentions an extraordinary number of persons—nearly fifteen individuals and classes—but they all gather about "the king" as the center. Many questions arise about the relations implied. Among them is the special problem of the "daughter" in v. 11; and is she the same as "the king's daughter" in v. 14; and is the father of the latter the same as "the king" named before and after? As I have elsewhere argued (JBL, 1900), the simplest solution of these and other problems is to suppose that an old court ode (perhaps of Hezekiah's time) has been reworked for religious use at a much later time. "The king", then, may be at one moment the original one and at another the name of a new conception. If we mark the verbal links with other "royal" poems, we find that they are numerous in vv. 3-8, 18, scattering in vv. 12-17, and absent from vv. 2, 9-11. In those poems there is nothing like the "daughter" here, and nothing, except in 72, like the details of courtly splendor. If the "daughter" is to any degree a figure for Zion (as may be inferred from analogies in the Prophets), the only Psalter parallel is in 9:15. The close similarity of other passages with "royal" poems justifies applying to many lines any interpretation found suitable in those poems. The assertions of endless power and blessedness comport best with a national interpretation. We therefore conclude that the recasting of the original ode was made under the general impulse that inspired the "royal" poems generally. Indeed, we may even argue that this poem was made directly to imitate 72, 21 and perhaps 18.

In 72, we have in v. 1 "the king" and "the king's son" in parallel. At first sight the two seem to be in contrast. Yet the presumption is always that terms in parallel are more alike than different, unless the whole parallelism implies antithesis. In this case the petition is certainly not that God should bestow "judgments" on one person and "righteousness" on another; and the sequel shows

that but one person is in view. The phraseology may have been occasioned by the relation between David and Solomon (whence the title), but the force of the compound expression is probably either the Davidic line or the nation. If Israel is the real topic of the poem, the conception of its mission corresponds strikingly with that of II Is., with its wide vision in space and time. And then the whole treatment is seen to culminate in the doxology of vv. 18-19, which in this case we may well regard as part of the preceding poem, both because of its likeness in thought and style, and because of the location of the colophon. If the doxology is part of the poem, the latter is certainly a glorification of the destiny of Israel.

In the above summaries no mention has been made of 20, 110 and 132. In 20, "king" occurs only in v. 10, where it must refer to Yahweh. In 110 and 132 "king" does not occur.

In 20, however, "anointed" occurs in v. 7. We have assumed above that its sense is defined by the plurals in v. 8, so that the latter part of the poem is national. But how about the earlier part, with its vocatives in the singular? To whom is this addressed? The personage in view is depicted as exercising priestly functions, reminding us of 110:4 and, more distantly, of 132:9, 16-18. There are also many verbal links with other "royal" poems. And it stands next to 21, with which it harmonizes well. For all these reasons, without giving any weight to "king" in v. 7, it is reasonable to conclude that 20 belongs in some way to the "royal" series and is to be read like other poems in that series. (It is possible, however, to take vv. 2-6 as a liturgical formula *adapted* to its present place; but even this hypothesis does not affect the sense of the completed poem.)

110 speaks at the outset of "my lord", a personage to whom, apparently, the whole poem refers. This has been taken as meaning David, at the beginning of the national history, and has also been identified as Simon Maccabaeus, near its end. The N. T. writers naturally make it mean Jesus. The objection to supposing David, or any early king, is the assertion about priestly dignity in v. 4. The objection to supposing Simon, or any other Maccabaean prince, is mainly that which holds against the Maccabaean hypothesis of the Psalter. Of course, for those who believe that most or all of the Psalter is extremely late, arising mainly in the second century B. C., there is no difficulty in assigning this to Simon's time, just as all the other "royal" poems are parceled out among the leaders of that period. But to those who believe that the hypothesis is untenable in the face of the phenomena of the Psalter as a whole (as has been argued in these Studies), the assignment seems unwarranted. That

this poem might be *applied* to Simon or John Hyrcanus is natural enough, and that coincidences with its phraseology may occur in extra-canonical writings. But such applications and coincidences are not proofs of the date and origin of the poem, any more than a few identities of expression between I Mac. and Pss. 74 and 79 prove that those poems refer to the devastation of Jerusalem by Antiochus. It is more in line with the comparative evidence to say that "my lord" here, like "the anointed" and "the king" elsewhere, means Israel, which, in the minds of its noblest interpreters, came to have both royal and priestly dignity among the nations. Of this view there may be some indication in 20.

132 requires little attention at this point, since its references to the priesthood are not explicitly connected with a personage, but with the eminence of Jerusalem as a center.

Without undertaking an exhaustive summary of the traits that are magnified in the conception of "the king", it will be enough to select three. The first of these is the perpetuity, under God, of his "life" or his rule. This is in some way intimated in all the "royal" poems except 2, 20 and 63. It is hard to believe that this would be so confidently asserted of any individual, unless the tone of the context in each case justifies regarding it as a piece of Oriental court flattery. Rather is it simpler to suppose that it is the expression of the unconquerable faith in the ideal Israel, chosen and anointed by God for a peculiar mission.

A notable difference between the references is this. The perpetuity of the Davidic *line* ("seed" or "throne") is affirmed in 18:51; 89:5, 30, 37-38, and perhaps echoed in 45:7 (if an emended text is accepted). But the perpetuity of "the king" himself is set forth in 21:5, 7; 61:7-8, and probably intimated in 45:3, 18; 72:5, 7, 17. The inference is that 18 and 89 represent an earlier stage of the thought.

A second feature in the picture of "the king" is the breadth of his dominion. Under varying terms this is presented as wide and inclusive, reaching to "the uttermost parts of the earth" and "all nations". If this universal empire rests upon memories of the empire of Solomon or the wide sway of any of his immediate successors, it is certainly extraordinary that there are no other hints of its derivation. If it be taken as a wild dream in the Maccabean era, it is hard to harmonize it with the evidences in the writings of that time that the Jews

were aware of how little was the bulk and power of their state among the political forces about them. Rather are we to connect it with that sense of the inextinguishable potency in Israel of which the Prophets spoke, and which was in part the Gospel before the Gospel.

Here again we note a difference in the references. On the one hand, some emphasize the notion of violent struggle with "enemies", as in 2:8-9, 12; 18:38-48; 21:9-13; 45:5-6; 63:10-11; 89:23-24; 110:1-2, 5-6; these do not greatly differ in spirit or texture from the reactions against antipathy or contumely that are characteristic of D. On the other hand, a few seem to have a vision of peaceful tribute flowing in from foreign lands, as in 45:13; 72:8-11, 15, 17, or a supremacy without explicit violence, as in 45:17; 89:26, 28. In this case, perhaps, we may hesitate to trace a clear development in the thought. But the connection of the second group with II Is. is fairly evident.

A third feature is the attribution to "the king" of special qualities, either of superior dignity or of beneficence. He is not simply a king in name, but in truth, with whatever noble traits befit an ideal ruler. We might not specially notice the attributes of power, were they not expressed in terms that are elsewhere used of God. But the emphasis on justice and benignity is peculiar. If the two aspects belong together, "the king" is conceived of as at once mighty and good. It is true that his kindness seems to be directed toward "the poor and needy" and "the righteous"; but nothing more than this is to be expected.

The distribution of these features in the poems is limited. The epithets of power are mostly confined to 21 and 45, though, of course, implied elsewhere. The epithets of goodness are confined to 45 and 72, being conspicuous in the latter.

Here is an appropriate place to refer to the terms "son" and "firstborn" in 2:7; 89:27-28.

The three notable terms applied to the "king" are *קֹרֵן*, *בְּנֵי*, and *הַרְבֵּה*. The first is elsewhere used as a purely human attribute only in 7:6; 8:6; 16:9; 30:13?; 49:17-18; 84:12; 112:9; 149:5?—excluding cases where it may be the name of the Presence of Yahweh; the second only in 8:6; 149:9; the third not at all. *קֹרֵן* occurs only in 45:3 and 84:12. Of the insignia of royalty—throne, crown and scepter—there is no mention outside these poems except in 122:5.

It is possible to say that the terms of 72 supply a strong objection to the theory here being advocated, since, if "the king" is made

to mean Israel and if his goodness is to be directed toward "the poor and needy", etc., we make the poem say that Israel is to do good to itself, which is rather empty, if not nonsensical. But this objection is finical, since there is no doubt that the ideal Israel is distinguished in conception from the actual members of the nation.

If one works long in the details of these expressions about "the king", it is hard to avoid the belief that they are somehow directly connected with the many passages, scattered through the Psalter, in which the kingship of *Yahweh* is explicitly mentioned. If this connection exists, it implies that the thought bases itself upon the supreme power and control of God in the affairs of men, which in some measure He has delegated to Israel as His vicegerent. In other words, here is a particular illustration of the working of the doctrine of the Theocracy, which is one of the distinctive marks of Judaism.

The distribution of the explicit terms that are here used as clues is peculiar. They are relatively most frequent in Bk. IV, followed by Bk. II and Bk. I, and with Bks. III and V relatively weak. In Bk. I they are confined to poems between 5 and 29, except 35:24?. In Bk. II they are fairly well distributed throughout. In Bk. III they are found only in 74, 75, 82, 84, 89. In Bk. IV they are almost all in 93-99. In Bk. V they are mainly in 145-149. (This enumeration includes מלך and מלכות sg.²) These terms are not found in "royal" poems except in 20:10; 45:7; 89:10, 15.

Probably the most striking passages are 7:9, 12; 9:5, 8, 9; 10:16, 18; 22:29; 24:7-10; 29:10; 45:7?; 47:3, 7-9; 67:5; 89:15; 93:1-2; 95:3; 96:10, 13; 97:1, 2, 5; 98:9; 99:1; 103:19; 145:11-13; 146:10; 149:2.

It is impressive to observe in these passages the accent upon the three notes of perpetuity, universal dominion and beneficent justice—precisely those that are characteristic of "the king" in the "royal" poems. In Bk. IV is a sonorous series of hymns of adoration in a specially triumphant key,

² These words are included because in the Psalter they seem to bear usually a rather special meaning, practically equivalent to "rule" or "govern" and "rulership" or "government" respectively. It is true that the function of "discrimination" and "judicial award" can also be attached to them in some cases. But in most cases the sense of executive administration is clearer than that of the mere disposal of judicial questions.

three of which begin with the exclamation "Yahweh reigneth (is King)", and all of which develop a theme of peculiar elevation. This series really extends from 92 to 100. Twice in it (96, 98) is found the culminating exclamation that "Yahweh is come to judge (rule) the earth in righteousness and truth (or, equity)", which may possibly rest upon some notion that at length the dominion of God is to become more visible and tangible than heretofore. Many traces of this notion can be found elsewhere, as in 145 and the stirring poems that follow. All these poems belong to the class that we have called "liturgical", but they have much individuality in that class, as if they expressed a single stage or aspect of the general liturgical impulse.

It may be significant that just before 92 lies the fragment at the end of 91 that has already been noted as like the "royal" poems.

It may also be significant that in 99:4 we have an obscure reference to "the king", ordinarily regarded as meaning Yahweh. But since the line is probably somewhat corrupt, it is possible that originally here there was a reference to the ideal spirit of Israel.

Whether or not the above suggestion that the "royal" poems are intimately connected with one group of the "liturgical" ones is accepted, it is probable that they belong to a late stage in the evolution of the Psalter. This is indicated by their placing in the several parts of the collection, and also by their association with the D poems. It is also shown by their lexical affiliations at some points with the L style in general. But this must not be understood to mean that there may not be in them an early element, even one that reaches back into the Exile. Attention has been called to some slight signs of development of thought in them, beginning with certain predications concerning the Davidic line as such, and passing over into what we have called a "national" appropriation of the Davidic covenant. It is possible that in 89 and 18 we have vestiges of the early stage of expression, later amplified in 72 by the accretion of elements derived from II Is., and then again modified by the influence of the bitter reactions against "enemies" that are evident in most of the D poems. If 110 properly belongs to the series, it suggests a still further

extension of the conception to include priestly dignity. From their tendency to adopt more or less liturgical phraseology, we may perhaps infer that the group as a whole in some way represents the priestly class—the Temple circle—whereas most of the poems of Bks. I-III seem to represent the circle of “the faithful” generally—that of the Synagogue.

One more remark has suggested itself as the material has been reviewed, though I have not had time to search into it properly. I think that there are signs that this particular strain of writing in the Psalter is rather closely connected with that found in certain poems scattered through the O. T. outside of the Psalter, particularly such poems as Deut. 32, I Sam. 2, Hab. 3, &c. Just how this apparent connection is to be estimated is not clear to me.

In short, in this feature of the “royal” poems, as in others, the general position of the Psalter is intermediate between the body of the O. T. (particularly the Prophets) and various extra-canonical writings (like Ecclesiasticus, Wisdom, the Testaments of the Twelve Patriarchs, the Psalms of Solomon, &c.). It is hard to understand how anyone who is thoroughly familiar with the Psalter expression can assign it to the same period and atmosphere as any of the latter. They imitate and quote from the Psalter, just as the Psalter imitates and quotes from the Prophets. There are some lines of thinking and speaking, of course, that run unbroken through all three stages of development. But there is also a distinct progress or transformation of thought going on.

In the latest period of Judaic literature a characteristic feature is the centering of expectation upon some individual, either one actually in command or an ideal personage yet to come. This is the last stage in the growth of the Messianic ideal. Although something like this may not have been wholly wanting earlier, I believe that in the Psalter the dominant conception is that of Israel itself as “royal”, or, at least, as constituting the royal line, so that to it the ancient promises are to be applied. The forms of expression imply that this ideal was personified, so that it was ready to be transferred to actual individuals. I believe that it was the vigor of the Maccabaeian revolution, with its disclosure of the gifts of individuals to become leaders in action, like the “judges” of the

olden time, that did most to push the conception forward into its final personal form—that in which it stood at the time when Christ appeared. These late captains and statesmen were hailed as both kings and priests, thus uniting the traditions of Judah on the one hand and of Levi on the other. But back of all this lay a profound sense that in some way God had committed to *Israel* a portion of His own regal dignity, so that the ideal Israel was not only the inheritor of the promises, but even a sort of incarnate expression of the divine power and purpose.

At this point we bring these Studies abruptly to a close. It is obvious that they might be greatly prolonged, since there are various kinds of data of the lexical class that have not been touched, and all the problems that have been here taken up merit far more extensive discussion. As stated at the outset, the one object of these articles is to call attention to certain phenomena that have not been as fully observed or reasoned upon as they deserve. Incidental to the display of these facts has been a considerable amount of comment from the writer's own point of view. This comment is meant to be more illustrative than conclusive. It shows how one mind works in adjusting itself to the implications of the phenomena, but it is put forth without forgetting that other minds may work very differently. All that scientific method demands is that all essential facts shall be observed accurately and that hypotheses to explain them shall comport with the observations. Every serious student should welcome the indication of flaws in his observations or in his inductions. Until such indication is made he must rest in whatever conclusions he feels to be demanded.

Accordingly, I venture to hold that lexical arguments suggest

(1) that there is a widely diffused body of "liturgical" material scattered through the Psalter, including not only whole poems, as especially in Bks. IV-V, but many superimposed verses and passages, especially in Bks. I-III—this material being relatively late;

(2) that, taken as a whole, the "David" poems represent the sentiment of an orthodox class that felt itself unjustly

persecuted for its opinions and practices, and that its most characteristic expressions are so located in the Psalter that we may infer that they, too, were superimposed upon a collection already existing (the D poems, for example, being generally later than the A and K poems);

(3) that the phenomenon of Elohimism apparently implies that the oldest section of the Psalter is to be found in Bks. II-III, although the final editing was in the hands of a party that greatly exalted an extreme Yahwism;

(4) that the moralistic strain illustrated by the acrostic poems and the peculiar nationalistic feeling expressed in the "royal" poems give further indications of the complex situation of thought out of which the Psalter grew—both of these being imposed upon much already in existence, though not all of it being extremely late in date.

In the attempt to reason from the multitude of lexical data by which the several constituents of the Psalter are distinguished from one another, and also to compare them with similar data in other parts of the Old Testament, on the one hand, and in various extra-canonical books, on the other, we find ourselves more or less driven to the hypothesis that the Psalter largely represents the situations and the sentiments of a period relatively late in the post-exilic history, preferably the third century B. C. It must be late enough to allow for the development of a strong social and national self-consciousness, and for the incoming of a powerful external influence like that of Hellenism. It must not be so late as to raise difficulties in allowing time before the LXX translation was made, or in providing for the further evolution of parties and views that is indicated in extra-canonical writings. All weight must be given to the necessity for time in which these poems could not only be collected, but be recognized as canonical (probably through long-continued iteration in social worship). All weight must also be given to the absence in the Psalter of clear signs of the existence of just those political and religious parties that are conspicuous in the late second and the first centuries B. C. These considerations tell strongly against any extreme form of the Maccabaeian hypothesis for

the Psalter, if they do not preclude that hypothesis in any form. But the Psalter is certainly not very far removed, except in a small proportion of its poems, from the Maccabean time. Its tone and expression have enough similarity to later writing to suggest that it mainly represents a period preparatory to that of the Maccabees. Does not the third century B. C. meet the requirements of the problem? If so, then the Psalter is an invaluable source of information for a period otherwise extremely dark and uncertain. This general opinion can be held, of course, in such a way as not to stand in the way of recognizing any poems or parts of poems in the Psalter as representing much earlier periods, as far back as the Exile or even beyond. But the further back we go, the more stringently must we require that the evidence of antiquity shall be clear and definite.