

THE EMENDATION OF PSALM LXXXV 9.

IN the last number of the JOURNAL p. 251, Mr Slotki proposes to change the masoretic reading *וואל-ישבו לבסלה*, which is certainly difficult, into *ואלי שבי לב סלה*. The *סלה* is attractive, but the same cannot be said for the rest. It is always dangerous to say that a phrase is not Hebrew, even after diligent study of the concordance, but I venture to think that *שבי לב* cannot mean 'those that return with [all] their heart'. In fact *שבי* with a genitive implies 'turning from (or to)' something. You can say *שבי פשע* 'those who turn from sin', but *שבי לב* would only mean 'those who turn away from a heart'. Secondly, no Hebrew writer surely would ever use such a series as *אל-ואל-ואלי*. Thirdly, *אלי*, which is called by the grammarians a poetical form, occurs only in Job (four times) among other peculiarities of language, but is never found in the Psalms. No doubt the proposed emendation was suggested by that quoted from Dr Briggs *ואלי שבי לבם לה*. We do get some odd Hebrew in modern commentaries, and this is some of the oddest. If the inspired writer must be corrected, perhaps we might read *ואל-ינשברי* (*לב סלה*). This has at least the merit of making sense and is not so very far from the masoretic text. If *ישבו* was written defectively, there is only a corruption of three letters: *נ* into *ו*, *ר* into *י*, and *ב* into *כ*. The meaning would then be 'and to him (them) that is (are) broken in heart. Selah'. Other emendations might be suggested, but perhaps after all it is sufficient to change *ואל* into *ולא*: 'He shall speak peace to his people . . . and they shall not turn again to foolishness'.

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ANTE-NICENE INTERPRETATIONS OF THE SAYINGS ON DIVORCE.

DR ARENDZEN, on p. 223 of the last number of the JOURNAL, has misunderstood a sentence of mine, viz. that 'Tertullian and Origen take opposite views on the question whether the Lord simply reaffirmed Deut. xxiv 1, of which Tertullian adopts the stricter interpretation, Origen the laxer'. The antecedent to 'of which' is 'Deut. xxiv 1'—not the question of the Lord's reaffirmation of it. My meaning was that Tertullian's interpretation of Deut. xxiv 1 coincides with the stricter (Shammaite) Jewish view of that verse, viz. that it allowed divorce only for adultery; while Origen's interpretation agrees with the laxer, Hillelite, view, that other offences also were grounds for divorce. Tertullian, taking the stricter view of the verse, maintains that the Lord reaffirmed it; Origen, taking the laxer view of it, that the Lord went beyond it.

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