

which is not only echoed and reëchoed by all external nature, but finds a still deeper response in every faculty and power of the soul — nay, in that consciousness of derived being which lies behind these powers and faculties — that voice is God.

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## ARTICLE VI.

### TRANSLATION AND EXPOSITION OF THE SECOND PSALM.

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#### I. MESSIANIC APPLICATION OF THE PSALM.

1) *Testimony of the New Testament.* Acts 4: 24—27. The whole company of the apostles ascribe this psalm to David, quote the first two verses, and affirm that they are a prophecy of the Messiah. Acts 13: 38. The apostle Paul, in a discourse at Antioch quotes the 7th verse as a proof of the resurrection of Christ. Heb. 1: 5. The author of the epistle to the Hebrews quotes the 7th verse to prove that Christ had a nature superior to the angels; and again, Heb. 5: 5, the same author cites this verse to prove that the Messiah was appointed to his work by God.

The idea of *accommodation*, in this application of these passages, is out of the question, for the sacred writers do not adduce them as mere illustrations, but as direct proofs; and if the psalm were not originally intended to predict the Messiah, the passages quoted are nothing to their purpose. This is sufficient to prove the Messianic character of the psalm, with those who acknowledge the divine authority of the New Testament. Just before our Lord's ascension to heaven, he pointed out to his disciples those passages of the Old Testament, and particularly of the Psalms, which referred directly to himself (Luke 24: 27, 28, 44, 46); and immediately after his ascension we find them applying this psalm to him, undoubtedly on his own authority.

2) *Jewish testimony.* The older Hebrews always regarded this psalm as a prophecy of the Messiah, and never thought of giving it any other application, till they were brought into difficulty by the use which Christians made of it to prove the messiahship of Jesus of Nazareth. This is frankly acknowledged by one of the most eminent of their commentators, Rabbi Solomon Jarchi, in the following remarkable passage: "Our rabbis have always interpreted this psalm of the king

Messiah; but according to the literal sense, and *that it may resist the heretics* (that is, the Christians), *it is expedient that we interpret it of David himself.*" David Kimchi also makes a similar acknowledgment: "There are those (says he) who interpret this psalm of Gog and Magog, and the anointed king is the Messiah; and so our rabbis, of blessed memory, understood it; and the psalm, explained in this manner, is very perspicuous. But it seems more probable that David composed it respecting himself, and so we interpret it."

3) *Internal evidence.* The internal evidence for the messianic application of this psalm, and against its application to David or Solomon or any Israelitish king, is perfectly conclusive, and was so acknowledged by Eichhorn (*Biblioth. der Bibl. Lit. I. 534*). Rosenmüller, in the first edition of his Commentary, applied it to Solomon; but in the subsequent editions he abandons this ground, and proves very clearly that it must be applied to the Messiah and to him only. Still he contends that it is an *ideal* Messiah, and not the *historical* Christ of the New Testament who is here spoken of; for the Messiah of this psalm is represented (vs. 9 and 12) as much too severe and cruel for the Christ of the New Testament. Any one who reads the New Testament will see at once the groundlessness of this objection. The coming of Christ to execute judgment on his enemies is, in the New Testament, represented in the same manner, and often in language even more terrific. As, for example, by the apostle Paul (2 Thess. 1: 7—11) *when the Lord Jesus shall be revealed from heaven, with his mighty angels, in flaming fire, taking vengeance on them that know not God and obey not the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ; who shall be punished with everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord and from the glory of his power, etc.* With this agree perfectly the representations which Christ gives of himself in Matthew xxiv. and xxv. See also Rev. 2: 29. 12: 5. 19: 15, where the very language of this psalm itself is used in reference to the *historical Christ of the New Testament.* The same idea is given of Christ, also, in the other prophecies of the Old Testament concerning him. Comp. Num. 24: 17—19. Isa. 11: 4. Ps. 92: 4. 110: 6, and other parallel passages.

We will indicate a few of the internal marks of the applicability of this psalm to the Messiah and the Messiah only.

Ver. 7th, the subject of this psalm is declared to be the *Son of God* in the highest sense, in the sense of partaking of the nature of God, which is applicable to no earthly king whatever. So the text is explained in the New Testament. Heb. 1: 5.

Vs. 8 and 9. The dominion of this king is to be coëxtensive with the earth itself, which applies to no earthly monarch. In the other

messianic prophecies, the same extent is given to his dominion. Compare Isa. 2: 2. Micah 4: 1. Zech. 9: 10.

V. 12. They are pronounced *blessed* who trust in this king; but the Old Testament pronounces those accursed who trust in any man, or in any being but God or the divine Messiah. So says the prophet Jeremiah (17: 5, 7) *Cursed be the man that trusteth in man. Blessed is the man that trusteth in Jehovah.* Compare also Micah 7: 5. Ps. 118: 9. 156: 13.

The attempt of Rosenmüller to make the pronoun in this verse refer back to *Jehovah* in v. 11, instead of *the Son*, which is its immediate antecedent, is entirely unsuccessful. It does open violence to the grammatical structure of the sentence; there is nothing in the context to justify it; and it is, in every respect, purely arbitrary.

In verse 7, the phrase, *this day have I begotten thee*, is referred by Paul to the day of the resurrection of Jesus (Acts 13: 33); inasmuch as the resurrection was the event which proved, beyond all contradiction, the messiahship, the sonship of Jesus. To the same idea Paul recurs in Rom. 1: 8, 4, the sense of which may be given thus: *Jesus Christ our Lord, who was a descendant of David as to his human nature; but as to his spiritual, divine nature, was, by the resurrection from the dead, powerfully demonstrated to be the Son of God.* The verb *begotten*, therefore, is used, in the place quoted, in the *declarative* sense so frequent in Hebrew; as may be illustrated by such examples as the following: Ezek. 48: 3. "The vision that I saw when I came to *destroy the city.*" Ezekiel never came to *destroy the city*, but to *prophesy*, to *declare* its destruction. See 9: 4, 5. Also Jer. 1: 10, God says to the prophet: "See! I have this day set thee over the nations and over the kingdoms, to *root out and to pull down, and to destroy and to throw down, to build and to plant.*" Jeremiah never either *rooted out* or *planted* nations or kingdoms, but he was appointed to *prophesy*, to *declare* these things. Again, Lev. 18: 3, 8, 13, 17, are instances of the same use of the verbs *אָמַר* and *יָדַע*.

## II. STRUCTURE OF THE PSALM.

In this psalm, as in most of the prophetic writings of the Bible, the prophet is not told by the Holy Spirit, in words, what events are to take place, nor does he write an account of them in the way of narrative; but in prophetic ecstasy he beholds the events actually occurring before his eyes, he sees the multitudes tumultuously assembling, he hears what they say, he sees God quietly seated on his throne, he hears him speak; and he writes down the whole scene, precisely as it met his eye and ear, without circumlocution or explanatory remarks. The psalm, therefore, in its form and spirit, is strictly dramatic; and it has

all the peculiar liveliness, vigor, and conciseness of expression, which belong to this species of composition. The persons who speak, are, 1st, the psalmist, vs. 1, 2; 2d, the rebels, v. 3; 3d, the psalmist, vs. 4, 5; 4th, Jehovah, v. 6; 5th, Messiah, vs. 7—9; 6th, the psalmist, vs. 10—12.

When these dramatic psalms were sung in the temple-worship, the different persons were easily represented by different parts of the choir, responding to each other. For information respecting the method of chanting in responsive choirs, see the following passages; Exod. 15: 20, 21. 1 Sam. 18: 7. Ezra 3: 11. Neh. 12: 24, 31, 38, 40. Compare also Lowth's Lectures on Hebrew poetry, Andover edition, p. 156 ff. and p. 390 f.

Ps. cxxxvi. is an instance in point, where the choir of priests chanted the first line of each verse, and the whole congregation responded in the constantly recurring chorus, *יְיָ לְעוֹלָם רַחֲמָיו*, for to eternity is his mercy.

In the 2d psalm, the whole choir might chant the part of the psalmist; a particular portion of it that of the rebels; a single voice, in one place, the part of Jehovah; a single voice, in another place, that of the Messiah; and then the whole choir, that of the psalmist again. Let this be borne in mind while reading the following

### III. TRANSLATION.

#### *The Psalmist.*

(*He sees the nations tumultuously assembling.*)

- 1 Why do the heathen rage,  
And the people imagine vanity,
- 2 The kings of the earth stand up,  
And the rulers set themselves  
Against Jehovah and against his Messiah?

#### *The Rebels.*

(*The Psalmist hears them speak.*)

- 3 Let us burst asunder their bands,  
And cast away from us their cords.

#### *The Psalmist.*

(*He sees God quietly seated on his throne in the heavens, with looks of derision at these rebellious and imbecile movements.*)

- 4 He that sitteth in the heavens doth laugh,  
The Lord doth deride them;
- 5 Then doth he speak to them in his wrath,  
And in his burning wrath doth he confound them.

*Jehovah.**(The psalmist hears him say)*

- 6 Yet have I anointed my king  
On Zion the mount of my holiness.

*The Messiah.**(The Psalmist hears him say)*

- 7 I will publish the decree,  
Jehovah hath said to me: My Son art thou,  
I thidday have begotten thee.  
8 Ask of me,  
And I will give thee the nations thine inheritance,  
And thy possession the ends of the earth.  
9 Thou shalt rule them with a rod of iron,  
As a potter's vessel shalt thou break them in pieces.

*The Psalmist.*

- 10 And now ye kings be wise,  
Be instructed, ye judges of the earth;  
11 Serve Jehovah with fear,  
And rejoice with trembling,  
12 Do homage to the Son lest he be angry,  
And ye perish on the way,  
For his wrath is suddenly kindled.  
Blessed are all they who trust in him.

## IV. NOTES ON THE TRANSLATION.

Vs. 1 and 2. These verses make one stanza of five lines, namely, two pairs of parallels, and a fifth line which belongs equally to all the four, and may be repeated after each one of them, thus;

Why do the heathens rage  
Against Jehovah and against his Messiah,  
And the people imagine vanity  
Against Jehovah and against his Messiah,  
The kings of the earth stand up  
Against Jehovah and against his Messiah,  
And the rulers take counsel together  
Against Jehovah and against his Messiah?

I can see no good reason for punctuating the first verse as an interrogative, and not the second. The two are most intimately blended together in the same stanza, and form, in fact, but one sentence, which is clearly interrogative.

V. 6. The verb  $\text{מָנַח}$ , in this verse, is not the word usually employed in Hebrew to signify *anoint*, and Hengstenberg, so mean authority, translates it in this place by the German word *bilden*; but Gesenius, De Wette, Ewald, and others, agree with our common English translation, which I have retained.

V. 7. Literally, *I will speak to the sense*, just like our common English idiom, *I will speak to that point*, etc. The time *this day* has before been shown, on the authority of the New Testament, to be the day of Christ's resurrection, that being the crowning proof of his sonship, and the verb  $\text{יָדַע}$  being here used in the *declarative* sense, so common in Hebrew.

V. 12. Literally, *kiss the son*, the kiss being the sign of homage. The Septuagint and Vulgate give a peculiar translation of the first line of this verse, thus:

"Take hold on instruction, lest the Lord be angry,  
And ye perish from the righteous way."

The similarity of the Greek words *παῖς*, *son* (in the accusative, *παῖδα*), and *παιδεία*, *instruction*, some critics have supposed may have led to this translation; but as the Chaldee gives the same rendering, it is more probable that they understood the Hebrew word  $\text{יָדַע}$  to mean *instruction*. Ewald gives the word a similar meaning; but the learned notes of Rosenmüller and Hengstenberg on this verse, together with the authority of Gesenius, De Wette, Winer, and Hitzig, sufficiently refute him.

#### V. FULFILMENT OF THE PROPHECY.

In regard to the time when the prophecies of this psalm are to be fulfilled, the whole psalm evidently belongs to that class of predictions, of which lord Bacon speaks as "having a latitude agreeable and familiar with divine prophecies, which, being of the nature of their Author, with whom a thousand years are as one day, are not fulfilled punctually at once, but *have springing and germinant accomplishment throughout many ages*, though the height or fulness of them may refer to some one age." (Advancement of Learning, Bk. II.)

The first two verses, the whole company of the apostles refer to the period when Herod and Pontius Pilate, the Jew and the Gentile, combined to put the Saviour to death; and the 7th verse the apostle Paul assigns to the resurrection. Acts 5: 25—27. 13: 33. The 8th, 9th, and 10th verses still remain unfulfilled.

But it is mainly whole classes of events, occurring through all time,

between the incarnation of Christ and the triumph of his religion over all mankind, and not particular historical circumstances, that take place at a definite point of time, which are indicated in this prophecy. *It hath springing and germinant accomplishment throughout many ages, though the height or fulness of it may refer to some one age.* It began to be accomplished when Herod and Pontius Pilate agreed together to destroy the Messiah; it received still further accomplishment when Julian the apostate waged war on the "Galilean;" it had a *πλήρωσις* when the Jewish legislature publicly renounced the Christian religion; it was again fulfilled when, in the days of rationalism, the literature of Europe was almost all employed to undermine the divine authority of the Bible, — whenever, and wherever, and however, men combine against Christ and his religion, this prophecy is in part accomplished; and will continue to be thus gradually fulfilled, *till He whose right it is, shall come and reign on the earth.* When that age comes, when the last great battle is fought (Rev. 20: 7, 10), then *the height or fulness of this prophecy will be accomplished.*

Very many of the Biblical prophecies are of the same character, and the attempt to limit the predictions, each one to some one particular historical occurrence, at a definite point of time, has been a fruitful source of perplexity and error in the interpretation of prophecy. Prophecy generally is not *history anticipated*, in the dry and literal sense; but rather a series of magnificent hieroglyphics, each one infolding and giving expression to a whole class of ideas. The whole book of Revelation is filled with prophecies of this kind; and the perverse endeavors to limit its far-reaching symbols to individual occurrences, has led to endless mistakes and blunders. The Book gives neither the civil nor the ecclesiastical history of particular countries or periods, but rather the *philosophy of history* for the whole world, through all time; the philosophy of history considered with reference to its religious influences. The 2d Psalm is a fair and remarkably plain specimen of the prophecies of this sort, and may give much assistance in the interpretation of others more recondite, complex, and ornate.

## VI. PRACTICAL USES OF THIS PROPHECY.

1. This prophecy shows what is the kind of encouragement, and hope, and comfort, which the enlightened Christian may derive from prophecy generally.

It is the object of the Bible to establish certain great principles in religion and morals. These principles it enforces and illustrates in the most graphic and striking manner, and by a great variety of methods:

by aphorisms, by parables, by narratives, by showing the workings of these principles and the effects of their violations in individuals and in nations. It also foretells the vicissitudes which await these principles in their conflicts with human depravity, their struggles, their successes, their temporary defeats, their final and complete triumph. (Compare Rom. 8: 19—23.) This is most generally the subject of prophecy. There are some prophecies strictly and minutely historical, such as those concerning the Jewish captivity, the destruction of Babylon, the ruin of Jerusalem, etc. But these are few in comparison with the whole number. It is not generally the object of prophecy to anticipate history, to give names and dates; and the attempts to interpret the great mass of the prophecies as if they were written with that object, have been most miserable failures. It is an attempt to treat the Holy Spirit as the oriental story-tellers treat their genii when they shut them up in little bottles. The triumph of principles over all opposition; the nature and power and varying phases of the oppositions: these form the great staple of prophecy — and such questions as, “Lord! what shall this man do?” generally remain unanswered. True, certain sayings often “go abroad among the brethren,” as interpretations of divine prophecy, but they are not authorized by anything which Jesus has said.

2. The psalm teaches us the hopelessness of all opposition, however formidable it may appear, to the progress of the gospel.

The opposition to Christ, in this world, often appears very formidable. *The kings of the earth stand up, and the rulers take counsel together, against Jehovah and against his Messiah* — and there is the still more chilling hostility of indifference and neglect. But the most powerful, and active enmity — at that, *He who sitteth in the heavens shall laugh* — the most immovable and stolid indifference, even that shall be aroused when *God shall speak in his wrath*. As Martin Luther somewhere says: “He that would blow out God’s fires, does but blow the coals and the ashes in his own face.”

3. This psalm illustrates the quietness and confidence with which the true Christian, even in the darkest times, should await the developments of God’s providence.

Perfect love casteth out fear, and where there is faith with love, there can be no ground for agitation or alarm or long anxiety. God is never agitated or excited; he is never hurried or impatient, though this world has so long been lying in wickedness before his eyes; and those who have learned of God and can sympathize with him, should remember that the Scripture says directly: *Fret not thyself because of evil doers*. In nothing do some professedly religious movements

more distinctly betray their unheavenly origin, than in the impatience, the fretfulness, the want of calmness and self-possession, manifested in them. Activity without restlessness, power without noise, earnestness without impatience, vigor without harshness, *steadfast, unmovable, always abounding*, with a quiet assurance of ultimate and complete success — these are the characteristics of a soul imbued with the spirit of the 2d Psalm, which is the Spirit of God.

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## ARTICLE VII.

### THE GERMAN UNIVERSITIES.

By Dr. Hermann Wimmer, late Professor in the Blochmann College, Dresden, Saxony.

AN American university and a German "universität," differ very much from each other. The fact is, that the name is here applied to colleges for general education, preparatory to professional studies (gymnasias or gelehrtschulen), whereas it means in Germany an institution for theological, juridical, medical, and philosophical learning. Consequently, the latter can be only compared with the divinity, law, medical and scientific schools of Cambridge or Yale college. There exists, however, a good deal of difference; and to give, beforehand, some idea of the peculiar organization of the German universities, we may be allowed to anticipate the following remarks. Each State or province has one university, where the graduates of all gymnasias (eleven in Saxony) meet together; whereas in Cambridge, the students of the four professional schools are mostly graduates of the one chief college. The university consists of four faculties, but is one complete institution, and the difference of the faculties does not exist for the student. He can attend theological and physical or philosophical lectures, according to his liking. There are no classes. The instruction is given by lectures, not by recitations. Several professors lecture generally on the same subject, or on similar subjects of the same branch. The student chooses the lectures which he will attend. The professor knows not his audience. Some professors have ninety hearers; others, nine. The "philosophical" faculty comprises all the philological, mathematical, physical and philosophical branches, and is destined as well for the students of the three professions as for those who prepare themselves for professorships in the same branches. Only practical exercises,