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ARTICLE III.

STUDIES IN HEBREW POETRY.[1]

By Prof. B. B. Edwards.

AGE OF THE ALPHABETICAL POEMS.

WHEN we investigate the unknown forms of ancient poetry, it must be regarded as an advantage if we meet with anything, proceeding from the authors or their times, which exhibits an authentic division of the verses. Dispensing with conjecture and experiment as to the manner in which the text is to be separated into members, we can at once examine the condition of the single divisions of the verses, the incidental grouping of them into strophes, and the entire external structure of the poem; and from these observations, we can look at the other poems and see how far the same or similar forms may be revealed in them, and thus enlarge and complete our inquiries. Such an advantage is furnished to the student in the field of ancient Hebrew poetry by those alphabetic poems whose external form is distinguished by the alphabetic arrangement regularly appearing at the beginning of each verse or group of verses. We have no inconsiderable number of them. They are Psalms 9 and 10, 25, 34, 37, 111, 112, 119, 145, Prov. 31: 10—31, Lam. 1—4. Hence an inquiry on the form of Hebrew poetry has to begin with these; especially the preliminary question, whether the Hebrew poets in general composed in prescribed forms, must here first find its solution. Still, before we proceed to the examination of these poems, it will be proper to ascertain the age of this alphabetic structure, since on this may depend the utility of the results. If the alphabetic Psalms as such belong to the latest period of Hebrew poetry, then the conclusion in respect to the forms of these pieces, in relation to those of the older poems, would be the more doubtful from the fact that they have been assigned to a period when true poetry was extinct, and an artificial structure had usurped the place of a free poetic inspiration, and thus a form foreign to the old poetry may have been introduced. Certainly in this respect modern critics have passed a judgment on this species of poems in

[1] Condensed and translated from a volume published at Bonn in 1846, entitled, "Biblische Abhandlungen von J. G. Sommer, Licentiaten v. Theol. u. Privatdocenten an der Rhein. Universität zu Bonn," pp. 373.

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the highest degree unfavorable. De Wette, in his Introduction to the Psalms, remarks: "I consider the alphabetic arrangement as a contrivance of the rhythmical art, a product of a later and corrupted taste. When the spirit of poetry has flown, men cling to the lifeless body, the rhythmical form, and seek in this to supply the want. As a matter of fact, almost all the alphabetic poems are remarkable for want of connection (which I regard as a consequence, not as the cause of the alphabetic arrangement), by the ordinary style of the thoughts, by coldness and languor of emotion, and by a low and sometimes an artificial phraseology." So in particular Psalms of an alphabetic structure, this structure is made to serve as a mark of a late authorship. Thus these poems do not come into the period of fresh, living poetry, as the mass of the remainder do, but into the period, when in the place of poetic originality and of freedom, imitation, toilsome combinations and efforts for artificial forms, were introduced;—consequently in the last period of Hebrew poetry.

We cannot assent to this view. To affirm absolutely that the alphabetic Psalms are a later product of Hebrew poetry, which originated when the proper poetic spirit had vanished, is an assertion which on a more exact examination, cannot be substantiated. We may first look at the Lamentations of Jeremiah, in which we shall find a form of alphabetic structure so developed and ingenious, that no one can regard it as a first essay of the kind. In respect to the time of the authorship of this work, it may be said that no doubt would avail in favor of any period which would be in opposition to the well-grounded tradition that Jeremiah was the author. For these poems are manifestly the expression of a still fresh and violent grief over the very recent sack of the holy city and the temple by the Chaldeans. Now had not the alphabetic form been already long current, (and that this was the case is confirmed by the elaborated structure of the verses and strophes which we meet with in these poems,) then we cannot see how this poet should have hit on the plan of including his deep-felt lamentations in an alphabetical arrangement. At all events, it must have been a method altogether common, and employed in various ways; else we should not have met with it here, certainly not in this skilful form. Consequently the alphabetic structure of the verses, in origin as well as in development, does not belong to the period of the exile, but without doubt to an earlier time. Or can we believe that poetry fell with the fall of the State, and that of course the end of genuine poetry is to be placed before the period of the exile? Indeed it is a common opinion that from the time of the exile down, the intellectual power of the Israelites was broken, and that immediately

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after the exile, the Rabbinic period began. It is Ewald's opinion that the fall of genuine poetry and the increasing toilsome efforts in pursuit of learning occur at the end of the seventh and at the beginning of the sixth century B. C., as he allows none of the alphabetic psalms an earlier authorship. But we cannot well speak of a fall of art, of the sinking of genuine poetry, of the vanishing of the true poetic spirit, since we certainly possess numerous poems belonging to this period and the next following, which may be reckoned among the noblest specimens of Hebrew poetry. And if we look at the internal history of Israel, it could hardly be otherwise, for that antagonism or opposition, which in the times of the kings was directed to the developing of the spirit of the people and to keeping it awake, always becoming more definite and clear,—(an opposition between the theocracy and anti-theocracy extending even among the adherents of the national worship—) grew more intense not only towards the end of this period, but became involved with other mutually hostile influences which must have deeply touched and aroused the feelings of the Hebrews. To a party that despised the ancient worship, attached itself to a foreign religion and allowed itself in every wilful and unrighteous act, the pious worshippers of Jehovah became an occasion of vexation and offence, so much the more as the tendencies of this irreligious party were condemned and exposed in their native hatefulness. The hostility resulted to the prejudice of the friends of the theocracy, since the party of the "wicked," superior in number, and influential by wealth and power, were in a situation to show their hatred in the most emphatic manner. The pious, for the most part, actually poor, suffering and wretched, had their only strength and joy in their well-tried faith, in their reverence for God prescribed by law, and in the sanctuary, their centre of union. To appear before Jehovah and to bewail their trouble, to confirm one another in fidelity, to gain instruction on the empty prosperity of the wicked, to make known in hymns their overthrow and the certain salvation of the righteous;—this was the field in which the most eminent of this portion of the people moved. These hostile feelings increased the nearer the period of the exile approached. The expected judgment, which should destroy the wicked, came, but both the pious and wicked were alike involved. The religious feelings underwent a transformation, former hopes were broken, and from the perplexed contests and experiences of the inner life sprang forth new feelings,—humility and self-denial, deep seated love and trust towards the God of the fathers, whom there was a surer prospect of soon again worshipping at the place of his sanctuary. Where there is so wide a separation, and where the feel-

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ings of the heart are in pursuit of a fresh happiness, there poetry, which sympathizes with all the great movements of the soul and is the vitally fresh expression of them, may never be seized with dissolution.

There still belongs to that period, and shortly before the catastrophe, among other compositions, the ode of Habakkuk, which is to be reckoned among the finest in Hebrew poetry. Out of this period have also sprung a greater part of those poems expressing feelings full of boldness and confidence, complaints, and prayers for deliverance from an oppression which had gone to the utmost extremity, and which was inflicted by the enemies of the theocracy. To a somewhat later time, when the destruction of the State and the carrying away of captives had already commenced, belong Ps. 42 and 43, likewise a true master-piece of Hebrew poetry, remarkable for fresh and deep feeling, originality in expression, lively delineation and skilful completion; also Ps. 44, the work of a not less richly endowed poet; also Psalms 59, 60, 61, 74, 89, etc. If we should form our conclusion in regard to the poetry of that time from the remains which have reached us, our judgment can only be favorable, so that poetry then, not less than in earlier times, found a various nurture, and sharing in the movements of the external and inward life, preserved its originality, freshness and creative power.

We also possess some good poems of the time immediately succeeding the exile, so that that event was not a turning point in the poetical life of the people. The hostile opinions and divisions which had existed in earlier periods, continued through the exile, and with interests and views similar to those which the pious part of the nation had before entertained, the people proceeded to the reörganization of the State. A long time later, as the Israelites had become firmly reestablished in the Holy Land, and as they began to feel that all the former hostile divisions had disappeared, then first occurred a transformation of the popular life which had been gradually preparing—that tendency towards the external observances of the law, the exposition of which now took away all fresh, intellectual, and, especially, poetic life. This period, however, after which there was only a dying or dead poetry among the Israelites, cannot be placed before the exile. It is to be put after that event; and what belongs to this learned epoch, that is the later, is easily distinguished in general from all which originated in the old or middle periods. The question, therefore, whether the alphabetic Psalms as such belong to the later Hebrew poetry, has been already decided in the negative. The alphabetic structure in itself is no mark of the late authorship of a poem. In the first and oldest book of the Psalter, we find the alphabetic

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Psalms, 9, 10, 25, 34, 37. They bear David's name, and must have been regarded as ancient, by the collector of them.

They may be divided into six classes; 1. Those where every line of a verse begins with a new letter in alphabetic order; 2. Where the beginning of every other line follows the alphabetic arrangement, Prov. 31: 10—13; 3. Where every fourth line begins with the letter, see the beginning of Ps. 37; 4. This is seen in the structure of Ps. 119. The letter returns eight times and denotes the beginning of every first, third, fifth, etc. line; 5. This is found in the first two chapters of Lamentations. Each strophe has three verses, which a caesura for the most part divides into two unequal parts, and at the beginning of the strophe stands the letter; 6. This is found in Lam. ch. 3. The form of the verses and strophes is like that of the preceding, but the letter stands at the beginning of each of the three verses.

Rhyme in Hebrew Popular Poetry.

Rhyme, in the more extended sense, by which we here understand only a designed correspondence of sound in the final syllables of verses, was not wholly unknown to the Hebrews, yet, as it has been commonly viewed, not employed. Older scholars, indeed, influenced by the later Jewish poetry, maintained that the correspondence in the final sounds was an essential part in ancient poetry. Le Clerc, e. g. affirms in his essay on Hebrew poetry: "asserimus poesin Heb. non nisi in versibus ὁμοιοτελεύτοις iisdemque valde irregularibus consistere." Still, in opposition to him, it has been shown that a similarity in sound, resembling rhyme, might very easily occur, without design, in connection with like-sounding suffixes and the endings of verbs and nouns, especially in the parallelism of Hebrew poetry. Now were this consonance of final syllables found in no large poem, in a continued series, but only here and there and rarely introduced, then it might be ascribed more correctly to accident than to design.[1] Accordingly no place in general has been given to rhyme in Hebrew poetry. The old Hebrew, it is said, was too great in its simplicity, as well as too earnest for this jingling play.[2] Still, in my opinion, such a difference does not exist between the natural, rough popular poetry and that of cultivated, higher, more earnest poetry. In the remains of the

[1] So among the older writers, Sal. van Til in d. Sing—u. Spiel—Kunst d. Heb. II. 6. § 4, and Carpzov Int. II. 18. Comp. Saalschütz Form d. Heb. Poes. § 61.

[2] Ewald Poet. Bücher des A. T. I. 63. Comp. still p. 79: "with the same right as in regard to metrical syllables, we may seek in the Old Testament for rhyme, which nowhere, in no verses, can be shown to be designed, and which is wholly foreign to the old Heb. poetry."

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old popular poetry, the rhyme or the assonance, in the final sounds of verse, almost uniformly appears, and hence may be regarded as belonging to it. To the earnestness and solemn dignity of religious poetry, the rhyme might certainly not seem to correspond, especially as it reminded one directly of the more cheerful national life. Now Hebrew poetry finds its province and development especially in the religious field, in the service of Jehovah, and rhyme received from hence no cultivation, yea it gradually disappeared from secular poetry, since the latter became more closely connected with the developed form of the religious poetry.

The rhyme of the Hebrew national poetry[1] consequently stands on a lower stage; sometimes it resembles the modern; at others, it is only a repetition of like jingling sounds. Hence is always seen a certain tendency towards a musical euphony in the verses. We find the rhyme in the proper national songs or the prophetic sayings of early times, or in the epigrammatic maxims, which coming through the lips of the people to the time of the writer or collector, are perhaps no longer contained in their original form. Rhymed is that little song, accompanied by a dance, with which the Israelitish women went out to meet Saul and David after the victory over Goliath, 1 Sam. 18: 7,

הִכָּה שָׁאוּל בַּאֲלָפָיו
וְדָוִד בְּרִבְבֹתָיו׃

Of a like kind is that derisive exclamation of Samson on the Philistines, who had guessed his riddle, Judges 14: 18,

לוּלֵי חֲרַשְׁתֶּם בְּעֶגְלָתִי
לֹא מְצָאתֶם חִידָתִי׃

This reply is in verse, as well as the riddle itself with which it is connected, Judges 14: 14, and the solution is expressed rhythmically, though not in rhyme. The first is:

מַתָּאכֶל יָצָא מַאֲכָל
וּמֵעַז יָצָא מָתוֹק׃

The solution:

מָה מָתוֹק מִדְּבָשׁ
וּמָה עַז מֵאֲרִי׃

[1] It has fared somewhat like the rhyme of the Roman national poetry, of which traces can be shown, Näke de Alliteratione Serm. Lat. in Rhein. Mus. f. Phil, 1829, p. 388. On rhyme in the Roman national poetry, see Lange, in Jahn's Jahrb. 1830, I. 3. p. 256. Kahlert de Homoeoteleuti natura et indole, 1836, p. 19 sq. Generally we find rhyme more or less developed, but almost uniformly where there is a proper national poetry, in the Arabic, Romance languages, in German, Celtic, etc., and it is commonly the mark of the popularity of the poems.

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Here is found, instead of the rhyme, a striking repetition of a like-sounding initial syllable—an alliteration with the sound of M. The rhythm clearly appears provided the half-vowels are correctly pronounced.

The sacrifice-song of the Philistine lords in the temple of Dagon, Judges 16: 23, has a national tone, and is accordingly rhymed:

נָתַן אֱלֹהֵינוּ בְּיָדֵנוּ
אֵת שִׁמְשׁוֹן אוֹיְבֵנוּ׃

Also the song of the people themselves, v. 24,

נָתַן אֱלֹהֵינוּ בְּיָדֵנוּ אֶת אוֹיְבֵנוּ
וְאֵת מַחֲרִיב אַרְצֵנוּ
וַאֲשֶׁר חִרְבָּה אֶת חֲלָלֵינוּ׃

That sentence used in the daily breaking up of the camp, in the march through the desert, is likewise in rhyme, Num. 10: 35,

קוּמָה יְהוָה וְיָפֻצוּ אֹיְבֶיךָ
וְיָנֻסוּ מְשַׂנְאֶיךָ מִפָּנֶיךָ׃

Also Lamech's song, Gen. 4: 23, 24,

עָדָה וְצִלָּה שְׁמַעַן קוֹלִי
נְשֵׁי לֶמֶךְ הַאְזֵנָּה אִמְרָתִי
כִּי אִישׁ הָרַגְתִּי לְפִצְעִי
וְיֶלֶד לְחַבֻּרָתִי
כִּי שִׁבְעָתַיִם יֻקַּם קָיִן
וְלֶמֶךְ שִׁבְעִים וְשִׁבְעָה׃

At the end of the first two parallelisms the i-sound appears prominently; the two last lines have another kind of correspondence in sound shibbâthăim yŭkkăm kâin—shibim shibâ. Also the prophetic saying on the new-born Noah, Gen. 5: 29,

זֶה יְנַחֲמֵנוּ מִמַּעֲשֵׂנוּ
וּמֵעִצְּבוֹן יָדֵינוּ
מִן הָאֲדָמָה
אֲשֶׁר אֵרְרָהּ יְהוָה׃

As in the first two lines the *ênu* is repeated in *mênu, sênu, dênu*, so in the last two lines there is the double *a* sound in *dâmâ, rarâ, yavâ*. The last, properly *yave*, would here be made to correspond, probably, with the preceding by a slight modification of the sound. Such obscuring of vowel-sounds is found in almost all national poems where there is any aim at correspondence of sound; and that the Hebrews made account of this is clearly shown, among other things, by the

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etymology of proper names; e. g. גִּלְעָד and גַּלְעֵד are placed directly after each other. So the song of the well, Num. 21: 18,

עֱלִי בְאֵר עֱנוּ לָהּ
בְּאֵר חֲפָרוּהָ שָׂרִים
כָּרוּהָ נְדִיבֵי הָעָם
בִּמְחֹקֵק בְּמִשְׁעֲנֹתָם׃

The two last lines are rhymed, and the sound of the last word of the first line returns in the second word of the second line and in the first of the third.

As has been before mentioned, the rhyme often appears in proverbs, which, for the most part, proceed from the living expression and the lips of the people. Thus Prov. 22: 10,

גָּרֵשׁ לֵץ וְיֵצֵא מָדוֹן
וְיִשְׁבֹּת דִּין וְקָלוֹן׃

See also Prov. 23: 22. 12: 25. 24: 28, 29. 25: 17. The consonance and rhyme in these passages is hardly accidental. They belong to the old national poetry, and here the rhyme seems to have had its authorized place.

The case is different with the rhymes, rarely occurring, in poems of a higher style. Here they may have come in unnoticed, and bear as little marks of design, as those hexameters in the prose of Livy and Tacitus, which commentators are accustomed to mark. Such are Ex. 15: 2. Deut. 32: 1, 2. 6. Ps. 119: 169. 170, Ps. 2: 3. 3: 2. 6: 2. 8: 5, etc.

There are passages where we are doubtful how the similar sound of the final syllables is to be viewed. E. g. the rhyme in Is. 60: 19, cannot be wholly accidental, for it seems too artificial:

לֹא יִהְיֶה לָּךְ עוֹד הַשֶּׁמֶשׁ לְאוֹר יוֹמָם
וּלְנֹגַהּ הַיָּרֵחַ לֹא יָאִיר לָךְ וְהָיָה לָךְ יְהוָה לְאוֹר עוֹלָם
וֵאלֹהַיִךְ לְתִפְאַרְתֵּךְ׃

See also Job 10: 9—18. Obviously designed is the correspondence in sound in Job 16: 12, and in that lies half of the emphasis:

שָׁלֵו הָיִיתִי וַיְפַרְפְּרֵנִי
וְאָחַז בְּעָרְפִּי וַיְפַצְפְּצֵנִי

Manifestly for this object the similar position of the sentences was chosen, together with the unusual verbal forms.

In the popular addresses of the prophets, the rhyme appears not seldom. They let it pass, where it occasionally presented itself, with-

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out either seeking it or avoiding it, e. g. Is. 1: 9, 12, 24, 25, 29. 5: 2, 14. 8: 7, 12, 13. 10: 5, 6, 11. 11: 5, 7, etc.

But of higher importance than this correspondence in sound in the final syllables—which was easily attained when sought,—is that striking and ingenious device, similar to like-sounding epithets, designed to promote the unity of thought. E. g. Amos 5: 5, בַּאוֶן גִּלְגָּל יִגְלֶה וּבֵית אָוֶן יִהְיֶה לָאָיִן; Is. 21: 2, בֹּגֵד בּוֹגֵד וְשׁוֹדֵד שׁוֹד; Zeph. 2: 4, עַזָּה עֲזוּבָה; Jer. 6: 1, בְּתְקוֹעַ תִּקְעוּ שׁוֹפָר; Is. 41: 5, comp. Zach. 9: 5, רָאוּ יִרְאוּ. We linger no longer here, since this preference for like-sounding and piquant expressions is connected with the prophetic style, and though popular, does not belong to poetry properly so called.[1]

EXPLANATION OF THE WORD סֶלָה, SELAH.

General Observations.

This word has been subjected to a great variety of interpretations. In some places it should seem to be a designation of time; in others to be closely connected with the context; in some it stands independently; again it seems to mark the conclusion of a strophe; or it is a musical term of unknown meaning; or it signifies a pause, where the voices cease and the instruments begin. Suitable means to ascertain the signification of the word are almost wholly wanting. Tradition is opposed to tradition and one testimony is at variance with another. The subject, though difficult, is still not without value. A brief examination may throw light on other important questions.

Jewish Tradition.

The Targums and the later commentators upon them give to the word the meaning *eternally, forever.* The Targum of Jonathan everywhere assigns it that sense, commonly placing for it, לְעָלְמָא or וּלְעָלְמִין. Even in Hab. 3: 3, it is made to mean "*by his eternal power*, he covered the heavens with his glory." With this agrees not only the Targum of Joseph the Blind, but the other ancient Jewish remains written in Aramaean. The Talmud (Erubim ch. 5, p. 54) makes the three words נֶצַח סֶלָה וָעֶד synonymous. Aquila renders it *ἀεί*, which Jerome follows in agreement with his Rabbinic teachers. Theodotion and Symmachus waver, not knowing whom to follow. The former in Habakkuk writes *εἰς τέλος*, the latter *εἰς τόν αἰῶνα*; in the Psalms, with the Seventy, both write *διάψαλμα*. A similar variation is found

[1] Knobel in his Prophetismus I. p. 406 sq., has collected these paronomasia.

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is the Syriac versions, though *διάψαλμα* is probably a later interpretation. Selah with the meaning of לָעוֹלָם was early employed in the liturgies, and being a euphonous closing word was placed once or more after the amen. It is hardly necessary to say that this meaning is untenable. In some places it is opposed to the sense, in others it is superfluous. E. g. Ps. 77: 16, "Thou hast redeemed thy people with a strong arm, the sons of Jacob and Joseph. Selah" — eternally! Ps. 89: 5, "from generation to generation thy throne. Selah" — eternally! Aben Ezra, while he rejects this signification, explains the word as synonymous with *amen*, not remembering that the two significations are originally so closely connected, that one must fall with the other, for the current use of Selah as *amen* rests on its being equivalent to לְעֵד. Most of the Rabbinic commentators remain true to the traditional interpretation. Kimchi, however, rejects it, and explains the word as a mark or sign to elevate the voice. In his Lexicon he adduces as a proof that the word is a musical sign, that it is found only in the Psalms and Habakkuk which were sung. This opinion found much currency especially in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries.

Hellenistic Interpretations.

The Seventy uniformly translate Selah by *διάψαλμα*. But it is not a little remarkable that ancient writers do not give us the exact meaning of this word. Origen and Athanasius afford no help. Gregory of Caesarea assigns to it a mystical sense — a temporary cessation of the influence of the Holy Spirit on the singing choir! Chrysostom regards it as only one among manifold opinions, that *diapsalma* designates merely the alternation of different choirs or choruses in the performance of a psalm. Jerome prefers the meaning *semper*. Augustine remarks that it is doubtful whether it is of Hebrew or Greek origin. All these are obviously only conjectures. If the word had not been wholly foreign to the Greek writers, there would have been a much more definite opinion in regard to its meaning. We may inquire why *διάψαλμα* should mean, as many suppose, a *change* an *alternation*. The reason is probably this: From its position it would seem to be a notification or note. The verbal import of it might lead to the further supposition that it was musical or rhythmical. As it occurs several times in the middle of a poem, it might seem to refer to the introduction of something new, or an alternation in the music, according to analogies in Greek poetry. There is, e. g. the *νόμος τριμελής*, where there was a three-fold change, the first being sung after a Dorian measure, the second after a Phrygian, the third after

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a Lydian. Thus it might be thought that *διάψαλμα* must be referred to something similar, i. e. it must be a mark for the introduction of a new mode or measure in a poem. Had the Alexandrian translators understood by the word an *ἐναλλαγὴ μέλους*, they would either have used this current expression or *μεταβολή*. Still they employ *διάψαλμα* without reference to the words just named.

Recent Explanations of the Word.

The number of opinions in later times has been very great and discordant. Some supposed that it served only to complete a metrical verse, and had no significance itself; others that it was a name of God, *excelsus*, from סָלַל *exaltare*; or that it originated at a time when the Psalter was not divided, and that it is a mark for the beginning of a new reading lesson; or that it is the Imp. Kal from נָשָׂא, *be propitious*, etc. Reime and others imagined it to be an abbreviation of a liturgical formula and to mean *condona nobis vel mihi, Deus*. But antiquity knew nothing of these Rabbinical abbreviations.

Herder explains Selah as indicating a change of tone, which is expressed either by increase of force or by a transition into another time and mode.[1] This is a repetition of the meaning of Selah as *διαλλαγὴ μέλους ἢ ῥυθμοῦ*, only not well expressed. What we call *time* did not exist in ancient music, so that we cannot speak of changes of time but only of a change of rhythm. So also with the change of key, for it is a groundless supposition that the Hebrews had various keys, though there might have been a change in the selection of the music or melody. Against Herder's theory it may be said that Selah occurs not only in connection with the strophic and other larger divisions, but also in the middle of a verse, where there can be no pause, but only a quiet progression in the thought. It is also not seldom found at the conclusion of a psalm, where consequently the representation is at an end. Mattheson[2] explains the word as meaning a repetition or a return, i. e. it is an indication that the melody should be repeated either by instruments or another choir. But supposing that the Hebrews were acquainted with this musical repetition—which is improbable—the word occurs in the midst of sentences, between the Protasis and Apodosis, yea even after the first words of a psalm, where a repetition would be absolutely inadmissible. Forkel[3] would make it indicate a change of time or a repetition of the same melody in higher or

[1] Spirit of Hebrew Poetry, II. p. 267, Marsh's Trans.

[2] Erläutertes Sela.

[3] Geschichte d. Musik I. p. 144.

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deeper tones, or an alternation of the singing choir or instrumental choir—an opinion which has been above refuted.

It has been thought by some that the matter could be set in a clear light by considering the etymology of the word as from סלח. Still, it is not absolutely certain from which of possible roots it comes. Gesenius derives it from סלח = שלח *quievit, siluit*, Imp. Kal properly סָלַה, with ה Paragog. סָלָה, in Pause, סֶלָה, and as Jussive Imp. with the meaning, *silence!* This view was adopted by Luther, Pfeiffer and others. It is at present the current meaning of the word, adopted by De Wette in his Translation of the Bible, and in his Commentary on the Psalms. Selah would thus denote that the song ceases and the instrumental part begins. This view certainly might be admitted, if we met with the word only in places like the following: Ps. 39: 5, 11, 66: 4, 7, 15. 76: 3, 10. 77: 3, 9. 81: 7. 83: 8. 84: 8. 89: 37, 45, 48. 140: 3, 5, 8. 143: 6, where the word manifestly stands in connection with the sections and transition-points of the psalms. On the contrary, the pause of the singers and an interlude are inexplicable, contrary to the sense even, in passages where the Selah is placed in the midst of sentences which are very closely connected, e. g. Ps. 55: 19. 68: 7, 32. 85: 2. 87: 6. 88: 7. Hab. 3: 3, 9, and elsewhere. In the two last cases, the word is placed in the midst of the verse. It is also found at the conclusion of a Psalm, e. g. 3, 9, 24, 46, where the note *silence!* would have no meaning, for the performance is at an end, and the ceasing of the singers would be self-evident. But supposing that an instrumental after-piece were to follow the vocal part, it is inconceivable how this should be designated by the words, *Be silent!* The singers, after they had completed their performance, were still categorically commanded, that they should close their lips! At all events it would be superfluous. And then to call out to those prepared to play an interlude, *silence!* to annex a command where there is a proper limit of itself, is a supposition hardly conceivable.

On דְּעֶיוֹן סֶלָה Ps. 9: 17, Gesenius thus expresses himself: "Which by apposition may be rendered, instrumental music, pause, i. e. let the instruments play, and the singer stop." So Maurer: "fidium cantus, pausa," De Wette, "harping, pause," also Hitzig and the great majority of interpreters. But is it probable that such a direction as *silence! pause!* would have been expressed by music? In that case the words would have been reversed, for according to the supposition, the music should follow the ceasing of the vocal part. Besides, this interpretation is at variance with the accents, for a Tiphha is found under דְּעֶיוֹן, while סֶלָה is by the Masorites closely connected by a Merka. Ewald, in the explanation of the word, begins

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with Ps. 9: 16, where he supposes the phrase is found in full. The first of the two words means *skilful playing*, music, especially instrumental music. The other word, סֶלָה, he derives from the substantive סל, whose root סָלַל = *to rise, to ascend*, whence סֻלָּם *scala*, which word is likewise used in a musical sense. Accordingly סֶלָה means *up, upwards*, which in matters of sound is equivalent to *loud, clear*, and וְרִעְיוֹן סֶלָה = *the music loud*, i. e. let the vocal cease while the instrumental alone is heard. But this explanation has its difficulties. It must appear strange that in abbreviating the phrase, the most important word is omitted, while the almost superfluous word סֶלָה *upwards*, remains. Especially is וְרִנָּיוֹן the appropriate word to express the sounding of stringed instruments, and the meaning is fully reached in denoting the powerful or exclusive bringing out of the instruments. Besides, as already shown, such an interlude would violently separate sentences that are closely connected.

Two more opinions only will be adverted to. Prof. Köster,[1] leaving the relations of this note or mark to the psalmody undetermined, finds in it a strophe-divider, it being a special mark of the strophic division of the Psalms. The strophes of Köster, however, are a matter of uncertainty, and when these escape from our grasp, the Selah also loses its significance. Still, we would not deny that a correct, though not a complete idea, lies at the basis of Köster's view. De Wette, also, in the last editions of his Commentary on the Psalms, has called attention to the *strophic* meaning of Selah. Without looking here more closely at the prosodical position of Selah, we will remark, in passing, only this, that Selah is certainly found in many places at the conclusion of actual strophes. Still, it is readily seen, that if it were a proper strophe-divider, it would be found far oftener than it is in reality. In a great number of psalms, where the structure is undoubtedly strophic, it does not appear at all, and in poems where it is found, it does not throughout denote the strophes. But as a decisive objection, it must be stated that the word is found not only at the end but in the middle of strophes, Hab. 3: 3, 9. Ps. 55: 20. How could Selah in such cases serve as a divider of strophes?

Prof. Wocher,[2] also, starts from a correct point of view, viz. that סֶלָה is the expression of a very strong, earnest feeling, for all the passages where it is found are remarkable for strength and loftiness of emotion. The Psalms which contain סֶלָה were triumphal songs, ardent thanksgivings, jubilant hymns of praise, the overflowings of grief and despair, of longing desire and trust; and סֶלָה is certainly found at

[1] Stud. u. Krit. 1831, p. 54.

[2] Tübingen Theol. Quartalschrift, 1834, p. 631.

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such points in the hymn as concentrate the impression, or seize upon a great thought of the soul; thus it is found with names full of significance, e. g. Jacob, Joseph. According to this view, סֶלָה is the appeal or summons of the singer himself, who, with this word, expresses the most fervent feeling, and it belongs essentially to the text. Wocher derives it from סלה or סלל *to extol, to esteem, to weigh*, equivalent to *up! up, my soul!* sursum corda, or if from סלל, *value and ponder the word.* But if Selah is a mere animating call of an excited singer to those around him, then it is surprising that in many Psalms it is not found at all, which in respect to lyrical elevation and emotion are not at all inferior to those where it is found. Why is it wholly wanting in the songs inserted in the historical books? Why do not the prophets use it, whose words so often rise to the highest pitch of emotion, and which emphatically claim the sympathy of their hearers. But in the prophets it never appears, except twice in Habakkuk, where, as in the Psalms, the poetry is liturgical. It is not found in certain sections of the Psalms, e. g. in the long series, Ps. 90—139, 144—150. And if the word belongs to the text so essentially, why does it never occur in the context, but always apart from it?

Masoretic Text.

The Masorites joined סֶלָה immediately with the context of the verse with which it stands, just as was the case with the traditional interpretation of the Rabbins and the Targums. In their exegetical commentary—the punctuation-system,—we see the usual Aramaean-Jewish idea. How could the Masorites have known otherwise, as the learned men and Targumists of preceding times had determined the meaning? Or how could a better explanation which the Masorites might have had of the word have passed away in after time without a trace? No, it appears, incontrovertibly, from the Masoretic union-marks that they, like their predecessors and followers, understood the word as equivalent to לָעַד, *forever.* Comp. Ps. 82: 2, where Selah is connected in the closest manner with the verb, and made to correspond to עַד־מָתַי, "will ye *always* accept the person of the wicked?" So the Targum, לְעָלְמִין. See a like correspondence between the Masorites and the Targum in Ps. 62: 4. 3: 4, 9. 4: 4. 9: 16. Hab. 3: 9. In conformity with this explanation, סֶלָה is everywhere drawn into the context by the Masorites, and in most cases closely connected with the preceding word by a conjunctive accent. In the seventy-four places where Selah is found, the preceding word is connected with *Selah* in fifty-seven instances by Munahh, in three by Munahh superius,

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in nine by Merka, in two by Maqqeph. With such a punctuation, no other interpretation than the one above given is possible. In the other three places a distinctive accent stands before סֶלָה, yet the passages are of such a nature, that they do not form an exception to the above interpretation; e. g. Hab. 3: 3, a distinctive accent with the previous word was necessary; "Paran from eternity or forever," would have made no sense. So in Hab. 3: 13. In the other case, Ps. 55: 20, Selah in the sense of *forever* would be a mere tautology. Thus it is perfectly manifest that the Masorites followed no other interpretation in their punctuation than the common one of the Rabbins, which is undeniably false. The punctuation in such a case is without any binding authority. The Masorites pointed the word סֶלָה, perhaps in reference to נֶצַח, with which they supposed it corresponded in meaning, the punctuation being of like value with that to the musical superscriptions to the Psalms, which the Masorites understood no better than we do at the present day. What one does not understand, he cannot correctly point. The vocalization of the Masorites then affords no starting-point, from which, looking at the language, we can resolve the sense of the term. Setting the language aside, we must consider the thing itself.

Views of Sommer.

Since the meaning of all the passages where סֶלָה is found can be fully expressed without that word, its omission not impairing the thought, and since, on the other hand, no one of all the interpretations, if we connect the word with the context, as the Masorites have done, can be made out in all the passages, something superfluous being always appended to the verse, then it follows that סֶלָה does not properly belong to the context, but must stand independently, and is consequently an inserted or intercalary note. But this note is found only in poems, and only in such as were temple-songs, and which, for the most part, are still provided with musical notes, i. e. in psalms and in the lyrical ode of Habakkuk, which was designed for musical representation, and which is a psalm, both in contents and in prosodical form.

The contents of the passages where סֶלָה is found are certainly manifold; still it may be observed in general that it never stands with words that are of little importance, but always in connection with such as contain matters of moment for the theocracy, or as express a great religious sentiment. Here belong the references to the divine promises, which are represented either as fulfilled with thankful emo-

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tion, or with the expression of complaint as still unfulfilled; experiences of deliverances drawn from the life of the poet or from the history of the people; fervent appeals to the majesty and righteousness of God, to protect and bless the pious, and to inflict punishment on the wicked; deep sorrow on account of being forsaken by the God of salvation; longing for union with Him, etc. In short it is the main points in the religious consciousness of the Israelites which appear to be marked in those poems that contain Selah. The energy of feeling that predominates in such passages would correspond perfectly to a spirited, sonorous music, and סֶלָה accordingly has an essentially religious aim. Thus from many passages, the more definite design of this religious music is easily seen, namely, to impart, in an audible form, to the words with which the music was sung, full force of expression, in order to make it manifest that these words would reach the ear of the Almighty, and be answered. For this object there existed among the Hebrews, as among other ancient nations, a peculiar, musical rite, which had its place in connection with offerings, and thence was transferred to the psalmody. Thereby we approximate somewhat to the understanding of this dark term, סֶלָה, for the words with which it stands are certainly such as before all others would come up in remembrance before Jehovah.

In order to confirm this view, it will be necessary to examine all the passages where סֶלָה is found.

Ps. 20 is an inauguration hymn in behalf of a warlike undertaking of a king of Israel, for which, with the promise of rich offerings, the help of Jehovah is claimed. In this psalm Selah occurs only once, v. 3: "May he send thee help from the sanctuary and sustain thee out of Zion! May he remember all thy gifts, and thy burnt-offerings accept! Selah." This position of Selah in connection with the reason why help against the foe is sought, viz. in connection with the reference to the rich offerings of the king, which might be graciously remembered by Jehovah, reminds us naturally of that Mosaic ordinance, Num. 10: 9, 10, "And if ye go to war in your land against the enemy that oppresseth you, then ye shall blow an alarm with the trumpets; and ye shall be remembered before the Lord your God, and ye shall be saved from your enemies. Also * * * ye shall blow with the trumpets over your burnt-offerings, and over the sacrifices of your peace-offerings, that they may be to you for a memorial before God." Since now the trumpets designed for such symbolic music, were also associated with psalmody, it was certainly fitting that the trumpets should be introduced at those words in the sacrifice hymns which were particularly designed to reach the ear of Jehovah and

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claim his help, so that the requests connected with the sacrifices and the prayers might come into remembrance before him. There the main point was indicated. God would remember the piety of the king on which the prayer for divine aid was based. In Ps. 21, probably composed in reference to the same undertaking, but after its happy termination, and sung in connection with the thank-offering, Selah is found but once. As its position in Ps. 20 is in proximity with the prayer, so here it is connected with the thanksgiving: v. 3, "O Jehovah, in thy strength the king shall rejoice, and in thy salvation, how greatly shall he exult! The desire of his heart thou hast given him, and the request of his lips thou hast not withheld! Selah." Here the main point of the poem is marked by Selah. The rising tones would bring out the words emphatically, and bear them upwards to Jehovah's ear. In another psalm likewise composed and sung in connection with the sacrifice offered in the payment of vows, Ps. 66, Selah occurs in the three principal parts of the poem, first, after the introduction, which declares the praise of God; v. 4, "All the world shall pray before thee, and shall sing praises unto thee, shall praise thy name! Selah;" secondly, v. 7, which celebrates the majesty of God, "Who ruleth by his power forever, his eyes look on the nations, that the proud do not exalt themselves! Selah;" finally, v. 15, where the occasion of the poem and of the sacrifice is expressed, "I will come into thy house with burnt-offerings, I will pay my vows to thee, which my mouth has uttered in my distress. Burnt-offerings of fatlings I will offer to thee, with the incense of rams, I will offer bullocks with goats! Selah." The expressions of faith and of thankful vows addressed directly to Jehovah, are here distinguished by Selah, i. e. by the music there introduced, because they were designed to come up in remembrance before God. In a similar manner Selah occurs in Ps. 60, where the psalmist in behalf of a military expedition begun unfortunately, implores the help of Jehovah so much the more urgently as the war was undertaken from religious motives. As the last is the more important point, it is brought out by Selah, which elsewhere in this psalm does not occur, v. 4, "Thou hast given a banner to them that fear thee, that it may be displayed because of thy truth! Selah." Similar is the appeal to him, who heareth in heaven in Ps. 7: 5, "Let the enemy persecute my soul, and take it, yea let him tread down my life upon the earth, and lay mine honor in the dust! Selah." The poet marks the bold words by Selah, in order that they may be more certainly heard by God, and his own innocence recognized before him. Ps. 67: 1, "God be merciful unto us and bless us and cause his face to shine upon us! Se-

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lah." The music here introduced would bring out prominently the 'blessing,' so that God might hear and bestow it.

What has been said will throw light on the use of Selah in the four passages in Ps. 89. The psalm expresses deep grief on account of the miserable state of the times, and refers to the great promises made to Israel in former ages, yet remaining unfulfilled. In the first two passages, Selah concludes the reference to Jehovah's ancient covenants of mercy; v. 3, "I have made a covenant," etc.; v. 4, "Thy seed will I establish forever, and build up thy throne to all generations! Selah;" v. 37, "It shall be established forever as the moon, and as a faithful witness in heaven! Selah." Here Selah constitutes the great points in the hymn,—Jehovah's faithfulness to his promises. In the other two places the actual contrast to those animating views is exhibited; v. 45, "Thou hast covered him with shame! Selah;" v. 48, "Shall he deliver his soul from the hand of the grave! Selah." Here the lamentation of the psalmist on the apparent fruitlessness of those gracious promises, on the rejection of Israel and on his own life filled with sorrow, is distinguished by Selah. The poet sees death draw near, but no hope which will call forth thanks and exulting praise to the God of salvation. These complaints, together with the recollections of the ancient promises, would be made to reach the ear of the Almighty by the swelling tones of the music. In Ps. 87, is the expression of thanks for the fulfilment of the divine promises. Both the divine promises and the present condition of things are marked by Selah, "Glorious things are spoken of thee, O city of God! Selah." And of Zion it shall be said, This and that man was born in her, and the Highest himself shall establish her. The Lord shall count when he writeth up the people, that this and that man was born in her! Selah." Here is a reference to the security of Jerusalem and to her greatly increased inhabitants, as a proof of the Divine protection and blessing. So Hab. 3: 9, we are reminded of the ancient merciful deliverances, which the prophet hopes to see confirmed in a glorious manner in the approaching great afflictions: Bared is his bow; oaths of the tribes; triumphal song! Selah." As in Ps. 89, Selah occurs twice in Ps. 39, to express bitter complaint and longing to be heard. Ps. 88: 7, "Thy wrath lieth hard upon me, and thou hast afflicted me with all thy waves! Selah;" also in v. 10, and 84: 3. As in all these passages there is a direct or indirect appeal that Jehovah would remember mercy and afford help, so in Ps. 3, the word occurs at the three main points of the psalm, first in the representation of the distress, v. 2; and then in the delineation of the connection of faith with the divine help. To this loud call to Jehovah corre-

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sponds the sound of the trumpet. Finally it follows, v. 8, where there is the expression of joyful confidence that Jehovah will come to help. The music introduced at this point claims that Jehovah will hear. Similar is the use of the word in Ps. 55: 8. As the music introduced with סֶלָה exhibits sorrow, complaint and prayer for deliverance, with all their claims on Jehovah for a gracious answer, the same also holds good in the expression of lively thanks which should reach the Almighty. In Ps. 32, on the topic of the forgiveness of sins, the word occurs in both relations, first, at the conclusion of the description of the psalmist's troubles in body and soul, in consequence of the anguish of his mind caused by his guilt; and then with the declaration that God had pardoned his sins; and finally, with praise for this merciful deliverance. Also Ps. 85: 2. Ps. 46: 3, 7, 11, with the expression of joyful trust and 62: 8, with reference to God's mighty acts towards Israel, Ps. 76: 3, 9. 48: 8. 77: 15. 81: 7. 68: 7. Hab. 3: 3. Ps. 47: 4. With lively thanksgiving to God, Ps. 24: 9. 44: 8. 68: 19, 32. 84: 4. In the expression of earnest desire for God, Ps. 143: 6. With these words the pious feelings of the psalmist reached their highest pitch. Comp. Ps. 61: 4, also Ps. 24: 5.

The passages remaining to be considered are where the justice or righteousness of God is handled. It is unnecessary to prove how important this matter was in view of the pious Israelites. For centuries, the worshippers of Jehovah, oppressed and abused, were harassed with almost passionate desire, hoping and expecting the immediate divine interposition. Why the word סֶלָה frequently occurs in these references to the justice of God, or in the direct appeals to that justice, is this, that in all these passages, the words expressing a cordial trust in God and a spirit of prayer, have a liturgical signification, and are designed to go up in remembrance before God. E. g. "The heavens shall make known his righteousness, for God is judge! Selah." Ps. 50: 6. So Ps. 9: 17. 67: 5. 66: 7. 75: 4. In other places belonging to this class, the punishment and destruction of the wicked and heathen are directly prayed for, Ps. 9: 21. 59: 6, 14. 140: 9. The assured faith in the justice of God, that a speedy overthrow awaits the ungodly foe, is confirmed by the word Selah, as thereby God may hear them and grant their requests, Ps. 52: 5, 7. 49: 14, 16. 55: 20. 57: 3. The position of the word in the last passage is instructive: "He shall send from heaven, and save me from the reproach of him that would swallow me up! Selah. God shall send forth his mercy and truth." The supposition of a pause, or of a proper *intermezzo*, or of a division of the strophes, or the like, is shown to be wholly untenable. As a voucher for our explanation, it can be clearly seen, for

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what purpose the Selah is introduced. The psalmist, encompassed with trouble and danger, opens his poem immediately with an appeal to the divine compassion. But wicked men are the cause of all his trouble, "Whose teeth are spears and arrows and their tongues a sharp sword," and they are in like manner Jehovah's calumniators and blasphemers. On this latter point he founds his hope that he shall be delivered from them through Jehovah's aid. Consequently in the midst of the sentence he interposes the remark, "whom my enemies reproach," and distinguishes it with the note סֶלָה —(the intercessory, ritual music here falling in)—because the character of his enemies as those who disown God, is now fully brought into remembrance before Jehovah. In like manner, v. 7. Hab. 3: 13. Ps. 54: 5. 61: 5. 82: 2. In Ps. 4: 3, 5, both passages are accompanied by a symbolical appeal to God, that he would hear and help. See also Ps. 83: 9. 140: 4, 6.

We have now considered the seventy-four passages in which סֶלָה is found, and we cannot hesitate to recognize in them an actual appeal or summons to Jehovah. They are calls for aid and prayers to be heard, expressed either with entire directness, or if not in the imperative, "Hear Jehovah! or awake Jehovah!" and the like, yet still, in their connection, manifest addresses to God, that he would remember and hear the earnest expression of thanks, or the heartfelt convictions, desires and hopes of the psalmist.

A word in regard to the nature of the music indicated in connection with סֶלָה. In the Hebrew ritual there were peculiar musical instruments for the symbolical representation of an urgent appeal to Jehovah. These were the trumpets, חֲצֹצְרוֹת, which Moses introduced into the worship of God, and in Num. 10: 10, directed that they should be blown in connection with the sacrifices, so that they might be for a memorial for the offerers, וְזִכָּרוֹן, before their God. This instrument was used for the same object on the first day of the month in which that great act of God's mercy, the yearly atonement for Israel's sins was expected. This day was distinguished from the fact that the trumpets were blown in order that they might be a memorial before God. This is called, Lev. 23: 24, "a memorial of blowing of trumpets." The trumpets were also blown when the people went to war, "so that they might be remembered before the Lord their God, and be saved from their enemies," Num. 10: 9. 2 Chron. 13: 14. And they were used on other occasions as a symbolical accompaniment to an earnest cry to God for help, or to remind him of his mercy. Thus Judas Maccabaeus and his army, 1 Mac. 4: 40, when they found the

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sanctuary wasted and burnt, "rent their clothes, fell on the ground, and blew with the sounding trumpets, and cried to heaven."

If we can determine the object of these priestly trumpets, then we shall see with what design they were connected with psalmody. When the sacrifice-service received through David those essential additions which in consequence associated language with the mere symbolical expression of religious ideas and sentiments as the most spiritual and definite expression of the same, then the words, introduced into the symbolical ritual as a new form of it, were not themselves entirely deprived of a symbolical significance, but were enriched with a musical, symbolical accompaniment. The trumpets of the priests were connected with the Levitical psalmody, and that they had not a *mere* musical significance is apparent from the fact that they did not fall into the hands of the Levitical musicians, but, separated from them, remained with the priests. Wherever those who performed the psalmody are introduced, the priests with the trumpets are mentioned, along with the Levites, but always distinct from them, 1 Chron. 15: 18—24. 16: 4—6. 2 Chron. 5: 12. 29: 26—28. Ezra 3: 10. Neh. 12: 35, 36; and these two musical choirs, different in nature, remain separate in the performance of the psalm. The Levites stood in the singers' gallery, opposite to the priests with trumpets, 2 Chron. 7: 6. The instruments of the Levites served to praise and thank Jehovah; those of the priests for intercession. The musical character of this instrument was besides only of a subordinate kind. Though scarcely anything is stated in the Old Testament on the uses of the trumpet in the Levitical psalmody, yet a reference to the relations under which it appears, may guide us to probable conjectures. First, it was not at all analogous to the modern instrumental music as connected with the general harmony of a piece, nor to the present relation of wind instruments to stringed instruments and to the vocal part. The ancient trumpet was not adapted to melody, and the various performance with it consisted only in bringing out its tones either single or continuous, or in a more rapid interchange or alternating quantity, like our peals. In this was comprised the difference between תְּקַע בַּחֲצֹצְרוֹת *to blow with the trumpets*, and תְּרִיעַ בַּחֲצֹצְרוֹת *to blow an alarm with the trumpets*, Num. 10: 8, 9. The trumpet could not have been in any way an appropriate instrumental accompaniment for the ancient singing, which relied especially on a clear understanding of the words of the poem. Still, when we find it associated with the psalmody, its only office was to fall in at certain points, namely, those where intercession was expressed, or, in accordance with the words of the text, to indicate an appeal to Jehovah or to support it in a liturgical form. Occasion for

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this must have been so much the more frequent, as the "Lord's song" in ancient times was not designed, as was the case in later periods, to express the national feelings and necessities, or general ascriptions of praise to God; its contents were entirely of an individual character, so that the poet-musicians uttered, and called upon God to hear, their most characteristic sentiments and experiences, their personal sufferings and complaints, their thanksgivings and manifold petitions. Now if we suppose that the significant tones of the trumpet fell in with and marked the words where the psalmist would present before God the leading desires of his heart, his most ardent hopes and convictions and assure himself of being heard, then certainly these are the points or passages where we should find סֶלָה subjoined. Here therefore is seen the office or use of the trumpets, and here Selah also appears. It is placed by the poet at the passages, where in the temple-song, the choir of priests, standing opposite to that of the Levites, sounded the trumpets (סלל), and, with the powerful tones of this instrument, the words just spoken were marked and borne upwards to Jehovah's ear. This intercessory music of the priests was probably sustained on the part of the Levites by the vigorous tones of the psaltery and harp; hence the Greek term *διάψαλμα*. The same appears further from the full phrase וְהִגָּיוֹן סֶלָה, Ps. 9: 16, the first word denoting the sound of the stringed instruments, Ps. 92: 3; the latter, the blast of the trumpets, both of which would here sound together. The less important word, וְהִגָּיוֹן, disappeared when the expression was abbreviated, and סֶלָה alone remained.

Thus the main inquiry, What is the meaning of Selah, is answered.

ARTICLE IV.

NOTES ON BIBLICAL GEOGRAPHY.

By E. Robinson, D. D., Professor at New York.

I. Abila of Lysanias. The Inscriptions.

The Evangelist Luke relates, that John the Baptist entered upon his public ministry "in the fifteenth year of Tiberius Caesar; Pontius Pilate being governor of Judea, and Herod [Antipas] being tetrarch of Galilee, and his brother Philip tetrarch of Iturea and of the region of Trachonitis, and Lysanias the tetrarch of Abilene;" Luke

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