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The Gentlest Book of the Bible, 1958.

THE GENTLEST BOOK OF THE BIBLE

A continuation of the current series
on Biblical themes

~~Sunday~~, January 26, 1958

THE TEMPLE

Rabbi Daniel Jeremy Silver

If, after these services are concluded, you would go to our beautiful Chapel and examine there the magnificent stained windows which sparkle along its exterior, you will notice in the stained glass portrayed many of the significant and sacred ritual objects and the moral objects of our people. In several of the windows you will see a small five- or six-stringed harp, surmounted by a royal crown. The crown is David's, and the harp is King David's. From all our tradition, King David played on this harp and accompanied and composed many of the beautiful poems and hymns which feature our Book of Psalms. Indeed it was music, his ability with the harp, which first brought David into national prominence. King Saul, Israel's first ruler, was subject to periodic fits of extreme depression and melancholia. There were no psychiatrists in that day to consult, but the advisors of the King knew that "music hath charms which soothe the savage breast" and they advised their ruler to bring into his court, into his entourage, someone who would have been called in other times a troubadour or a meinesinger, a man who could play some beautiful instrument and sing to the king and bring the king slowly but surely out of his tension and depression. And David apparently, though young and though only a simple farm lad, had such a reputation. His reputation earned him a recommendation and an interview. He found favor in the sight of Saul, and when he did play for the king, the Bible tells us, "When the evil spirit came again upon Saul, David played for him and his anger was assuaged and the evil spirit departed from him". All is not tranquil and beautiful in the relations between Saul and David. Even while David continued as Saul's personal musician Saul's anger would sometimes get the better of him and the Bible records at least

one instance in which an enraged king took up the spear lying beside his bed and hurled it at the head of his musician. David apparently was born to good fortune. He was comely, he was able, and somehow had the knack, the ability, to be at the right place at the right time, and his growing fame and charm soon came in Saul's eyes to be a rival to his own. Saul's anger grew into hatred, and he drove the young David from his court. David was a refugee in exile for many years. When Saul met one day in battle the ancient enemy of the Jews, the Philistines, on Mount Gilbeah, his troops were defeated, and both Saul and his young, proud, princely son Jonathan died as a result of that battle. David, hearing of this, of the death of his ancient enemy yet benefactor, and of his son who was his closest friend, composed one of the most beautiful laments, or elegies, known to any language -- and elegy which still has the power to move us. And in this elegy I think we can see a bit of the reason that David is called "the "

הַשִּׁיר הַזֶּה
פס - the Sweet Singer of Israel".

"Thy Beauty, O Israel, upon thy high places is slain!
How are the mighty fallen!

Tell it not in Gath,
Publish it not in the streets of Ashkelon;

Saul and Jonathan, the lovely and the pleasant
In their lives, even in their death they are not divided;
They were swifter than eagles,
They were stronger than lions.

Ye daughters of Israel, weep over Saul,
Who clothed you in scarlet, who gave you all manner of delights,
Who put ornaments of gold upon your apparel.
How are the mighty fallen in the midst of the battle!

Jonathan upon thy high places is slain!
I am distressed for thee, my brother Jonathan;
Very pleasant hast thou been unto me;
Wonderful was thy love unto me,
Passing the love of women.
How are the mighty fallen,
And the weapons of war have perished."

David's reputation as a psalmist, as a poet, as a man who could sing the beautiful melodies of his people, gave him legendarily the title of the patron saint of all of Jewish poetry. And tradition ascribed to King David the authorship

of the one hundred and fifty poems or hymns which comprise our Book of Psalms. Actually, in the various subtitles which are given to these psalms in the Book itself, only seventy-three of these are called by his name, and modern scholarship has shown to us that most of these refer to historical events, happenings in Jewish history, which long succeeded the death of the king. Nevertheless, the role of David in the development of the poetic genius of our people cannot be underestimated. He raised poetry to a new stature, to a new rank among the people. It became a noble art, much sought after. It was probably he who developed the unique metrical, accentuated, rythmical genre of writing which became the basic format of all of the psalms and of the other poems which sprinkle our Bible. Certainly David tapped a rich ore of creative genius in the Jewish people, for the one hundred and fifty psalms which compose this psalter are among the most unique, well-conceived, moving collection or anthology of poems that have ever been devised. They are familiar to us because the psalms are probably the most familiar book of our Bible. They are the basic sub-structure of our prayer service. Many of the phrases from the Book of Psalms have become popular idioms in our language. We have only to think of such phrases as "Wine maketh glad the heart of man", "The days of our years are three-score years and ten, or even by reason of strength, four score years", "They that seed in sorrow shall reap in joy", "The stone which the builders have rejected has become the chief cornerstone". We might add to this list indefinitely. The man who collected these psalms is unknown to us. He lived in the third or fourth centuries before the common era, and either individually or as a member of some editing committee wrapped into this volume the cream of Jewish poetry which had been developed through the seven preceding centuries. Most of the authors of the psalms are equally anonymous. We know a few by name. Some twelve or thirteen are written by the B'nai, the Sons of Korach, who were apparently a guild of professional writers of hymns and psalms for the synagogue.

There are basically two types of poems which are contained in the Book of Psalms. The first is a highly personal, lyric poem, which expresses the inner turmoil, the emotions of an individual highly sensitive to the stresses and strains, the hopes and the fears, the discomforts and the triumphs which surround him in life. And this strain in the Book of Psalms is particularly important in the development of world literature because it represents in history the first development of a personal poetry. Until the days of the psalms almost all poetry was universal, directed to a group, written for a service or for a prayer ritual or for some ruling monarch. It had none of that richly subjective quality which has become so dear to the poets of our western civilization. The second type of poetry is a poetry of ^{the} a community, of the group, poetry generally written expressly for the synagogue service, as prayers to accompany the sacrifice, as songs to accompany the ritual. These poems express the basic hopes and aspirations and needs and faith of the Jewish people. And they continue to express the basic needs and hopes of the Jewish people and of all peoples, because they partake richly and deeply of the universal quality of human experience. Let me illustrate these two types of poems by two which were written about precisely the same occurrence in Jewish history. David conquered Jerusalem and established it as the capitol of the Jewish state. Some four centuries later the Jewish state was overrun. The capitol was destroyed, the Temple was desecrated and razed to the ground, and the nobility of the Jewish people were led away captive by Nebuchadnezzar, Emperor of the Babylonians, Czar of the whole of the Middle East. In the year 586 this exile began. It lasted for a half century and more. And in this exile the Jewish people developed some of the most important of the institutions which feature life for us today. Here was born the synagogue. Here was born the institution of the rabbinate. Here was born the dream of a democratic type of faith. But the people dreamt in their exile of returning to their homeland, reestablishing the Temple ritual and the festival and daily services which took place there, and two of the poems of bittersweet longing have been left to us.

The first which I should like to read to you is the feelings of an individual captive, and the last is a man who synthesizes the feelings of the group.

"As the hart pants after the water brooks,
So pants my soul after Thee, O God.

My soul thirsteth for God, for the living God:
'When shall I come and appear before Him?'

My tears have been my food day and night,
While they say unto me all the day: 'Where is thy God?'

Why art thou cast down, O my soul?
And why moanest thou within me?
Hope thou in God: for I shall yet praise Him
For salvation is of His doing."

And then the poet who synthesizes the feelings of many men who must have felt as the author of the forty-second psalm which I just read to you:

"By the rivers of Babylon,
There we sat down, yea, we wept
When we remembered Zion.

Upon the willows in the midst thereof,
We hang our harps.

They that led us captive asked of us words of song,
Our tormentors asked of us verse: saying
'Sing to us one of the songs of Zion'.

How shall we sing the Lord's song
In a foreign land?

If I forget thee, O Jerusalem,
Let my right hand forget her cunning.

Let my tongue cleave to the roof of my mouth
If I remember thee not;
If I set not Jerusalem
Above my chiefest joy."

Now poems such as the one hundred and thirty-seventh psalm which I just read to you were incorporated early and may have been written expressly for the service of the synagogue and of the Temple. There were in the Temple, besides the Kohanim, the priests who performed the actual sacrifices and made the decisions of policy, a group of ministrants known as Levites (l'veim), and among these Levites there were professional guilds of musicians and of singers - a chorus - who accompanied

all the festival and daily rituals and sacrifices of our people. We have still, in the superscription of many of the Psalms, specific instructions to the director of the temple orchestra. Thus, for instance, the 6th Psalm tells us that it is a psalm for stringed instruments, the theme of which is to be developed especially on an instrument called the "sh'minit", which apparently was a type of simple viola which had eight strings. Sometimes the superscription tells us even the key in which the psalms themselves were to be sung. We get an indication of the use of the psalms in temple worship in the familiar 118th Psalm, and we can see here how the solo voice gave out to the people the key phrase and the people would return a well-known chorus, so that you would have, as you do still in the Arab world in the Near East, the call of the cry of the muezzin from his high pulpit and the response of the people as a congregation:

"O give thanks unto the Lord, for He is good"
went out the call, and the response:

"For His mercy endureth for ever."

"So let the house of Israel now say"

"For His mercy endureth for ever."

"So let the sons of Aaron now say"

"For His mercy endureth for ever."

"So let them now that revere the Lord say"

"For His mercy endureth forever."

We have taken this

and we have used it as part of the beautiful Seder ritual. You will hear it in several months here at The Temple. We still use it in much the same form in which it was used in those days.

It is interesting to note, when we consider the Book of Psalms, that it is the one book of the Bible which is ever published by itself, and I am told that editions of the Psalter, just these one hundred and fifty poems, sell well over one hundred thousands of copies every year. If we look for the reason

for the popularity of this book, I think we will find that its familiarity is one. The second reason is in the unique quality which it possesses which I have called the quality of gentleness. When the cares of the world wash over us at night, or when we are troubled in our hearts and in our conscience by loss or illness, or when we are faced by an obstacle along the path of life which seems too much for us to overleap, or when we are enjoying some moment of elation, some triumph which we wish to share and fully to appreciate, somehow by turning to the Book of Psalms and sharing there the experience of others who with us have experienced these universal human emotions, we find a gentle refreshment of the soul, a new perspective on our individual situation, new hope, new faith, and new comfort.

The Bible speaks with many tongues. It speaks to us in many colors. The Five Books of Moses speak to us in terms of basic religious affirmations. It appeals to our mind, and asks us, as it tells us the great legends and law of our people, to exercise our mental powers, to understand the fundamental principles on which our faith is based. The Prophets disturb us, they challenge us, they command us. They order us out of our lethargy, out of our indolence, out of our self-concern into a new way of life - one more moral, more unselfish, more determined to secure the welfare of the community and of the world. There is an insistent quality which is emotionally disturbing, but healthy for the soul, in the Books of the Prophets. The Psalms speak to us gently. They lead us by the hand along the way of life. With the Prophets we might speak of as masculine, as disciplinarian, and authoritarian, the Psalms are our loving mother who shelters us a bit from the strains of life, who leads us by the hand through the various difficulties which confront us. The Gideon Society in America has made the most of this gentle quality in the Book of Psalms. I am sure that you all know of their national program which places a Bible in every hotel room and in most of the public buildings of our country. And if you have ever opened this Bible, which is the standard King James version, you will find that it is unique in only one thing, in that inside the front cover there has been glued a sheet of printed paper on which are listed the various

human moods which we all partake, and suggested readings which can help us solve these particular tensions and problems. Most of these readings, you will notice,

are from the Book of Psalms, and though some of us might wonder at the choices

which the Gideons have made, their basic idea was sound, because those who make

it a policy of reading the Bible will tell you that in moments of stress and

moments of loss, moments of tension and moments of anxiety they have found great

comfort and great sustenance by reading these magnificent soul poems. It is no

happenstance that we of the synagogue choose the 23rd Psalm to read at times of

mourning. Who then has not need of its quiet, gentle and reassuring faith?

"The Lord is my shepherd: I shall not want.

He maketh me to lie down in the green pastures:

He leadeth me beside the still waters.

He restores my soul:

He guides me in straight paths for His name's sake.

Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death,

I will fear no evil,

For Thou, O Lord, art with me:

Thy rod and Thy staff, they comfort me.

Thou preparest a table before me in the presence of mine enemies:

Thou hast anointed my head with oil: my cup runneth over.

Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life:

And I shall dwell in the house of the Lord forever."

And there is another psalm, the 130th Psalm, which has always to me brought

comfort, brought the reassurance that dawn will follow the dark, that light will

yet break on my troubles.

"Out of the depths have I called Thee, O Lord.

Lord, hearken unto my voice:

Let Thine ear be attentive

To the voice of my supplications.

If Thou, O Lord, shouldst mark iniquities,

O Lord, who could stand?

For with Thee there is forgiveness,

That Thou mayest be revered.

I wait for the Lord, my soul doth wait,

And in His word do I hope.

My soul waiteth for the Lord,
More than the watchman for the morning:
More than the watchman for the morning.

O, Israel, hope thou in the Lord:
For with the Lord there is mercy,
And with Him is plenteous redemption.

And He will redeem Israel
From all of his iniquities."

We need this gentle quality in our religious belief. Life is not easy. We can not always bring to the temple in terms of service, in terms of participation, more than we take from it. We need sometimes the ear which it gives us to listen to our troubles, the hand which it lends us to guide us and ~~in~~ sustain us along the slippery ways of life, the advice which it has for us to tide us through the times of evil and ill. Religion needs this quality of gentleness. It needs to bring comfort to the mourner, encouragement to the ~~infirm~~ and to the ill, gentle learning to the young, hope to those who are racked by tension in marriage or in their family lives. And religion has a great burden of comfort to give through the Bible and more personally through its teachers and teachings to those who will make this available to them. And we need also to complement the tenderness which God promises us with the tenderness which we show, the gentleness which we show, to our fellowman. The Overstreets once said that no marriage can long succeed unless both the man and the wife are gentle to one another. Unless they are slow to anger, quick to forgive, and willing to live with the inadequacies of the other and willing to sustain indefinitely, eternally, the other along the ways of life, a love which they said must know how to share and how to sustain and how to sacrifice. This is gentle love, the quality of gentleness which we need in all of our human relationships. We need to be slow to anger, not to take offense at assumed indignities to our person, not to return sarcasm for sarcasm, bitterness for bitterness, ill for ill. We need, if we are gentle people, to absorb more of the unhappiness of the world than we send out and transmit to the world. It is one of the tragedies of modern living that the instinctive gentleness of our young

we attempt to destroy. We train it out of them, or at least we tell them that in only certain areas of life has gentleness a place. It is a truism of modern economics that the heart has no place in business. We teach our young that in the economic world it is a dog-eat-dog world and that they should worry about themselves and not so much about the other person. And even our charity has become so organized that the individual generosity is separated from the generous response of the one who receives and we have not even that outlet for our young to sense the worth-whileness of gentleness.

I read recently, or I was shown recently, a lead article which appeared in the Wall Street Journal. It discussed the most economic and feasible means of pensioning, or otherwise ridding the company, of veteran employees who had not yet reached the retirement age but who had become a burden to a new management or new policies. And as I read this hard-headed, realistic article I could not help but think that no gentle man could be concerned with these terms. He weighs equally the dollar sign and the human person. He knows of the personality needs of this veteran person working with him. He plans for his future as much as for the future of the company which he is running. He finds some means of achieving both goals rather than simply setting the one goal - business success is preeminent - and forgetting the human values of the employees and the people who work for him and with him. We desperately need in our world a nascent, burgeoning quality of gentleness in all of our human relationships, to our friends, to our family and to our community. But it is well to remember that the notes, the chord which is struck by the Book of Psalms is only one of the many chords which comprise the symphony of the Bible. You need firmness as well as gentleness in life. We have seen this in our families in recent years, where those parents who allow complete permissiveness in their home - that which they misunderstood as gentleness - found that the young people were being raised without any sense of purpose, of order, any set of values onto which they could fall back. Permissiveness, timidity

is not the opposite of authority. We need to combine a sense of purpose, which is the firmness of the Prophets - the "Thou shalt" and the "Thou shalt not" of the Ten Commandments -- with the gentleness of the heart, with the gentleness of the soul and of the spirit. When we do, we shall be blending in our lives a truly worth-while mixture of motives and be leading lives worthy of being called mature. There has been recently in America an increasing voice given to those who claim that religion should be concerned only with the type of message which is revealed by the Book of Psalms - religion is healing, religion is love, religion is mental health. The minister must be principally the pastor. I even read recently an article in one of the leading Protestant journals where it was seriously proposed that the sermon disappear from the Protestant service. The author wrote, "We come to the service to commune with God, to pray and to forget." To forget. We come to the service to pray, to commune with God, and to remember, because a religion which tries only to comfort and to counsel and to bring happiness through those forms finally will bring increased unhappiness if it does not come to grips with the social and moral problems of the every day life and does not help its people to solve these. A rabbi spoke of two tendencies in Jewish life. One is to speak , the other , the words of consolation and the words of challenge. We must continue to preach both, to have the institutions of which we are a part and which we represent speak and teach both and to be willing to search for both from our pulpit and from our preachers. We must come to grips with the challenges of our daily life, and we must be willing to listen to those who tell us when we have failed to live up to these challenges. But we must be also willing to seek from them personal help when it is needed, comfort and faith, gentleness and firmness. These are the two poles within which Jewish life moves. May it continue to preach and teach both of these intelligently through the years ahead.

Amen

Second Samuel I v 19-20
v 23-27

Thy Beauty, O Israel, upon thy high places is slain!
How are the mighty fallen!

Tell it not in Gath,
Publish it not in the streets of Ashkelon;

Saul and Jonathan, the lovely and the pleasant
In their lives, even in their death they ~~were~~ ^{are} not divided;
They were swifter than eagles,
They were stronger than lions.

Ye daughters of Israel, weep over Saul,
Who clothed you in scarlet, ~~with other delights~~, who gave you all manner
Who put ornaments of gold upon your apparel. ^{of delight}
How are the mighty fallen in the midst of the battle!

Jonathan upon thy high places is slain!
I am distressed for thee, my brother Jonathan;
Very pleasant hast thou been unto me;
Wonderful was thy love ^{to} me,
Passing the love of women.
How are the mighty fallen,
And the weapons of war ^{have} perished!



Psalm 42 v ~~2-4~~ 2-4, 6.

AS THE HART PANTETH AFTER THE WATER BROOKS,
SO PANTETH MY SOUL AFTER THEE, O GOD.

MY SOUL THIRSTETH FOR GOD, FOR THE LIVING GOD:
'WHEN SHALL I COME AND APPEAR BEFORE GOD?'

MY TEARS HAVE BEEN MY FOOD DAY AND NIGHT,
WHILE THEY SAY UNTO ME ALL THE DAY: 'WHERE IS THY GOD?'

WHY ART THOU CAST DOWN, O MY SOUL?
AND WHY MOANEST THOU WITHIN ME?
HOPE THOU IN GOD: FOR I SHALL YET PRAISE HIM
FOR ~~THE~~ SALVATION ~~OF HIS SERVANTS~~.

is OF His DOING

IF I FORGET THEE, O JERUSALEM,
LET MY RIGHT HAND FORGET MY SWERING.

LET MY TONGUE CLEAVE TO THE ROOF OF MY MOUTH:
IF I REMEMBER THEE NOT:
IF I SEE NOT JERUSALEM,
ABOVE MY CHIEFEST JOY.



Psalm 137 v 1-6

BY THE RIVERS OF BABYLON,
THERE WE SAT DOWN, YEA, WE WEPT,
WHEN WE REMEMBERED ZION.

UPON THE WILLOWS IN THE MIDST THEREOF
WE ~~HUNG~~ UP OUR HARPS.

~~FOR THERE~~ THEY THAT LED US CAPTIVE ASKED OF US WORDS OF SONG,
~~AND OUR TORMENTORS~~ ^{demanded} ASKED OF US ~~WITH~~ ^{VERSE:} SAYING
'SING ^{to} US ONE OF THE SONGS OF ZION.'

HOW SHALL WE SING THE LORD'S SONG
IN A FOREIGN LAND?

IF I FORGET THEE, O JERUSALEM,
LET MY RIGHT HAND FORGET HER CUNNING.

LET MY TONGUE CLEAVE TO THE ROOF OF MY MOUTH,
IF I REMEMBER THEE NOT:
IF I SET NOT JERUSALEM
ABOVE MY CHIEFEST JOY.



Psalm 118 v 1-4

O GIVE THANKS UNTO THE LORD, FOR HE IS GOOD,
FOR HIS MERCY ENDURETH FOR EVER.

SO LET ISRAEL NOW SAY,
FOR HIS MERCY ENDURETH FOREVER.

sons
SO LET THE HOUSE OF AARON NOW SAY,
FOR HIS MERCY ENDURETH FOREVER.

revere
SO LET THEM NOW THAT FEAR THE LORD SAY,
FOR HIS MERCY ENDURETH FOREVER.



Psalm 23

THE LORD IS MY SHEPHERD: I SHALL NOT WANT.
HE MAKETH ME TO LIE DOWN IN GREEN PASTURES:

HE LEADETH ME BESIDE THE STILL WATERS.
HE RESTORETH MY SOUL:
HE GUIDETH ME IN STRAIGHT PATHS FOR HIS NAME'S SAKE.

YEA, THOUGH I WALK THROUGH THE VALLEY OF THE SHADOW OF DEATH,
I WILL FEAR NO EVIL,
FOR THOU ART WITH ME:

THY ROD AND THY STAFF, THEY COMFORT ME.
THOU PREPAREST A TABLE BEFORE ME IN THE PRESENCE OF MINE ENEMIES:
THOU HAST ANNOUNTED MY HEAD WITH OIL: MY CUP RUNNETH OVER.

SURELY GOODNESS AND MERCY SHALL FOLLOW ME ALL THE DAYS OF MY LIFE:
AND I SHALL DWELL IN THE HOUSE OF THE LORD FOREVER.

YEA, MORE THAN WATER FOR THE SOUL.

O, ISRAEL, HOPE IN THE LORD
FOR WITH THE LORD THERE IS MERCY
AND WITH HIM IS FAITHFULNESS.

AND HE WILL REDEEM THEM
FROM ALL THEIR INIGUITIES.



Psalm 130

OUT OF THE DEPTHS HAVE I CALLED THEE, O LORD.

LORD, HEARKEN UNTO MY VOICE:
LET THINE EARS BE ATTENTIVE
TO THE VOICE OF MY SUPPLICATIONS.

IF THOU, O LORD, SHOULD EST MARK INIQUITIES,
O LORD, WHO COULD STAND?

FOR WITH THEE THERE IS FORGIVENESS
THAT THOU MAYEST BE ~~FEARED~~ *revered*.

I WAIT FOR THE LORD, MY SOUL^{DOETH} DOETH WAIT,
AND IN HIS WORD DO I HOPE.

MY SOUL WAITETH FOR THE LORD,
MORE THAN WATCHMEN FOR THE MORNING:
~~YEA~~, MORE THAN WATCHMAN FOR THE MORNING.

O, ISRAEL, HOPE IN THE LORD:
FOR WITH THE LORD THERE IS MERCY,
AND WITH HIM IS PLENTIFUL REDEMPTION.

AND HE WILL REDEEM ISRAEL
FROM ALL HIS INIQUITIES.



1) ^{stained glass} The number of our church display many of the symbols sacred to Jewish history. One of the most prominent is an eight stringed harp surrounded by a crown. The harp is thus identified with King David. ^{who} ~~on~~ the harp our tradition tells us David improvised and accompanied many of the beautiful hymns and songs which are included in our Book of Psalms.

The Bible tells us that it was David's skill with his harp and his voice which first brought him to national prominence. David, David first King, was ^{oppressed} subject to fits of melancholia. During these seasons he was terribly depressed and inviolable. There were no physicians to turn to for aid. But ^{experience} ~~it was~~ ~~common knowledge~~ had shown "that music had power to soothe the savage breast." David's friends advised him to call to his servants which would have been called in other times a troubadour or minstrel, - ^{וְיִצְחָק וְיִשְׁכָּבֵד וְיִחְזִיקֵל וְיִחְזִיקֵל} a talented player of the harp. They felt sure melody would quiet David's disturbed spirit. David's reputation as a singer gained him a recommendation, Saul took a liking to the lad and welcomed him ^{to his entourage}. ^{an antiseptic} Minded David fell in his days for me on call "and it came to pass, when the evil spirit from God was upon Saul, that David took up the harp and played upon it, so Saul found relief and it was well with him. The evil spirit departed from him."

2) 73 of the 150 songs & hymns which comprise the Book of Psalms have a superscription which reads ^{פְּסַלְמֵי דָוִד} ¹¹⁸ - a song of David or more simply ^{פְּסַלְמֵי} - the piece is ascribed to David. This led to the popular belief that the whole book of Psalms ^{was} of his composition. But it is emphatically not the case. Many are the signatures of other authors. A whole collection of some two dozen psalms are titled as having been written by men known only as the ^{שֵׁנִי} ¹¹⁹ - the sons of a certain Korah.

Modern scholarship has also been able to show where many of the psalms - even some of the psalms claimed as written for David refer to the king in historical circumstances which

2) It is hard to consider the Book of Psalms as an anthology of Hebrew
Rel. poetry & hymns culled from the ~~first 70 or 80 years of Jewish history~~
which appeared between 10th & 3rd centuries BCE. Some authors
are referred to by name. Some dozen or so hymns are ascribed to a
James known as the ^{son of} David - the sons (perhaps the grandsons) of
David. Most of the poems are, however, anonymous as is the personality
of the man or group who finally edited & selected the collection.
Of course, not all the poems are of profound merit. Some have suffered
in transmission - but in all honesty we can say that time has
vindicated the fidelity of this man's choice. Through all ages the
Psalms Book has been a ^{universal} favorite.

It remains so to-day. It is the only book of the Bible which is regularly
published separately. It was once told that this special edition of the
Psalms sell well into the millions of copies per year. Much of
the Psalter's bold imagery has become familiar idiom.

"The stone which the builders rejected has become the chief
cornerstone

"We bring our years to an end as a tale that is told

"The days of our years are three score years & ten
or even by reason of strength four score years

"They that see in their shall say in joy

"We are made glad to be called of men

and the like

4] Basically, there are two types of people in their anthropology. One is
light, rational, personal & in it he sees more his needs & his hopes.
The second suffers the group experience and more social needs as
a community of God. The former seems to have been severely ^{united}
^{united} because the god could not refrain from visiting in continued. - The
latter seems to have been convinced that it is rather rational
of shared hopes & experiences might cause the synagogue sense.

As one ^{and really} illustrates the same historical
event. In the year 586 BC the Babylonian Emperor Nebuchadnezzar
conquered Judea, sacked Jerusalem, destroyed the Temple, and
led away the best part of the Jewish community into exile in
his homeland. For half a century or more these Jews suffered
oppression & homelessness - ultimately between hopeless despair
& spirit of renewed faith.

During this exile two paths led down the valley - In Psalm
42 even the subjection of the exile is spoken.



In Psalm 137 we have developed further the communal
experience - sentiment shared by the whole people - It is less
personal but no less moving.



3) The creative work which David discovered provided to be fertile & of high grade, many another sensitive soul poured out his dream and fears & doubts & have ~~with a still~~ ^{richer} whiter, images & emotional awareness still still in 3 millennia later despite the barriers of time & language. Proceeding one of the most ^{moving &} beautiful ~~was~~ ^{is} ~~in~~ ^{of} ~~the~~ ^{the} ~~world~~ ^{world} ~~to~~ ^{to} ~~another~~ ^{another} ~~scale~~ ^{scale} ~~being~~ ^{being} ~~the~~ ^{the} ~~Babylonian~~ ^{Babylonian} ~~epoch~~ ^{epoch} ~~longer~~ ^{longer} ~~to~~ ^{to} ~~come~~ ^{come} ~~back~~ ^{back} ~~again~~ ^{again} ~~in~~ ⁱⁿ ~~his~~ ^{his} ~~Temple~~ ^{Temple} ~~at~~ ^{at} ~~Jerusalem~~ ^{Jerusalem}

As the host parted after the winter hours
to parting my soul after that O God
My soul is a thirst for God - the living God
How long will I shall wait & appear before thee
My heart has been my hand day & night
While day & night me ask the day "Where is thy God?"
These things I remember & pour out my soul within me
How I passed on such the things & led them to the house of God
Will the voice of your praise, a multitude keeping holy day
Why art thou cast down, O my soul
And why moanest thou within me?
Henceforth in God; for I shall yet praise thee
For the salvation of is of thy doing.

4) Besides the highly personal and individualized poems, some of these hymns were written ~~specifically~~ ^{specifically} for the Temple service. They formed the basis of the earliest P.S. - a rule which shall long fill to-day. Among the Levites who ministered in the Temple there were guilds of professional singers & musicians who sang some of these poems in service accompanied by psalms, ~~and~~ ^{and} ~~stringed instruments~~ ^{stringed instruments}. Some of the psalms still begin with definite musical instructions. Thus Psalm 6 is marked - "For the leader, use string music; on the Sheminith" - ^{balala} "as instructed use ~~string~~ ^{string} ~~be~~ ^{be} ~~some~~ ^{some} ~~of~~ ^{of} ~~our~~ ^{our} ~~music~~ ^{music}."

many refer to events which took place long after David's death. This
the bitter-sweet homecoming of Psalm 137 was being written some 500
years after David when his great great grandchildren great great grandchildren
were suffering a long exile in distant Babylon.

By the river of Babylon

There we sat down, yea we wept
When we remembered Zion
Upon the willows in the midst thereof
We hung our harps

They that carried us off captive
Demanded of us song
Our tormentors asked of us mirth - saying
"Sing us one of the songs of Zion"

How shall we sing the Lord's song in a foreign land
If I forget thee, O Jerusalem
Let my right hand forget the harp
Let my tongue cleave to the roof of my mouth
If I remember thee not
If I pray not Jerusalem
Alas, all day.

Psalm which appeared ^{national} ~~group~~ home & asperation were usually incorporated directly into the Temple choir. They formed the basis of the conduct P.P. The temple was sung not only parts but by large groups of people among whom were guilds of professional singers & musicians who accompanied the festival & daily service with sacred music and orchestraled the compositions. The list of instruments played is large - covering the field of percussion, wind, & string. Some of the Psalm super-codes still contain the original musical instructions as to the type of melody, meter, & accompaniment - which Psalm 118 gives an indication of the type of effect after recitation. - The solo voice would give the key phrase & the chorus would come in with the verse.

"O give thanks unto the Lord for he is good
For his kindness forever

So let Israel now say

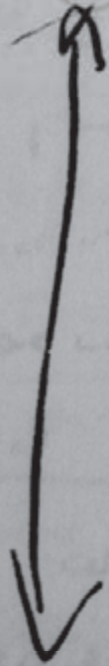
So let the house of Aaron now say

So let them who stand before the Lord say

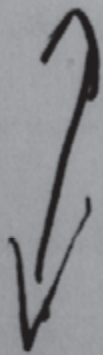
When Israel was brought out of Egypt
When Israel was brought out of Egypt

5) The opened pages of the Psalter is born of its faithful and, I think, of its quality of gentleness. The Torah can be thought provoking. The solemnity of the psalms can be profoundly disturbing. The Psalms - including their concern in battle and mourning and comfort. When the loneliness of a day makes sense or we become embittered by misfortune or rallied by triumph the gentle confidence & profound meditation of the Psalms refreshes us and gives us new perspectives and new hope.

It is an ancient source in our day which has updated the Book of Psalms. Motivated by deep piety, they have labored to place Bible verses both in homes and other public places. These Bibles are the standard King James Translations. They differ, however, in this - that inside the front cover there is usually a printed folder listing the various needs with which we face and listing selected readings - usually from the Psalms - which are mightily helpful. Their selections are a bit difficult sometimes to understand - But then there is a worldly man - To share in the ^{quiet certainty} of the author of Ps 23 it is to feel the beginning of new confidence. It is no other choice that we read these lines during a funeral service when faith is apt to be most troubled.



When I need encouragement - when it seems that my hope will be shaken - then always find the gentle spirit of Ps 130 most helpful



6) If we benefit from each other's - we stand equally to benefit from
 man's - how often in life did we not need the pencil of a helper's
hand - good counsel - perhaps only a gentle gesture when needed
 later to come to help to us, when we would our marriage be if
 we could not - not to let to have gently, since the other + judge gently
 & really & often

It is one of the tragedies of our social unity to breed gentleness
and of people - We have substituted organized charity for more
intimate help & trust among us - we are losing of direct appeal -
We have taken the "heart has no place in business" - That
it is a desecrated landscape where we ought to know more about
ourselves than we ever follow -

The great - new and new needs is much as his own.
It is slow to change - business & rapidly - He would not understand
a new economy, kind of work & someone showed me from
his words W all Street Journal where the subject of the most
economical & least painful way of dismissing veteran employees
now no longer needed was elaborated - The gentleman would
not submit that because to him the veteran needs in
great a \$0 dollar need.

The Overbrook's have shown that no marriage can succeed without guidance — that a duty to restrain ego, forest complacency and suppress ~~controversy~~ — What is love of marriage is love of all relationships — Human cruelty, which is the opposite of human gentleness & damages sex!

4) There is hardly a more powerful poem than the psalm reading. Call it all the ~~spirit~~ and of young David's soul, the trouble of Saul by his playing can be taken as symbolic of an illness that someone has thus the content to all in word or deed.

It is important, however, to remember that, however, comfort, and helpful the psalms may be they are only part of England's life. and the mood of gentle helpfulness - takes only one chord in the symphony of faith. A faith to be complete reach the furthest of the people in much with needs the gentleness of sympathy. Firmness your devotion's purpose to select needs. Gentleness makes it possible for us to achieve our goal. We have just had striking confirmation of the necessary balance in the field of child rearing. A generation ago the nation was urged by so-called experts that a child should never be disciplined - The home atmosphere was to be permissive. Authority was a thing of the past. Out of their hands came a generation of spoiled and confused young people. They had no ^{all too many} standards to which to guide themselves - for their parents had not imposed any & they had not been able to create any - So today - the pendulum has swung the other way - we are seeing not the authoritarian home but the permissive home - but the happy family which intelligently selects the best

sort of moral religion. There has been a bad cleavage in American values has emphasized Religion as the key - Religion as a key to mental health. There has been increasing pressure put on the ministers & rabbis to spend all their time in pastoral & counseling activities leaving the pulpit ^{the} minister of the proclaimed to his congregation. The role of minister as preacher - as a man who ^{understands} current tendencies & ^{provides} judgment within has been subjected to pressure. I read an article in ^{in a most Philadelphia Publicity} ~~the~~ "Current Church Religion in the Modern World not so Pulpit". In it the author advocated that the sermon should be left out. People come to pray, to sing - To commune with God. They would not be interested with speeches about right & wrong even personal & public lives.

a religion which ^{comfort} consoles but does not challenge & comfort is only a
half-partly developed faith. Rel. must offer help. It must also offer moral
solutions to current tensions and must that men's common duties up
to those requirements.

It is to find eternal credit in answer that of the 3 major faiths it has
been most receptive to find rel. This fold rule of gentleness and justice.
In so doing have to give of our faith rules balanced Power with
Prophecy and know that 2000 1000 5000 10 1000
words of reproach & word of comfort have been put there & one
place.

We pray that it may be successful with throughout



Yours sincerely,