

however, it is well for us to remember that what we have here is not merely selected poems from a few choice spirits, but a precipitate from the feverish struggles of a time that has not wisely been called "four centuries of silence." True, God is also in the silence, but we have to find Him in the confusion of opinions and the fierce strife of parties.

In the Psalms Yahweh is Lord of the world, supreme ruler over all kings and gods (88/8-10); He is the creator and guide of His people (100); the worship of idols is an absurd thing, only fit subject for contemptuous ridicule (115; note 17 of this Psalm, that the triumphant faith is still confined to *this* world). The faith in Yahweh is thus firmly established in the realm of nature (8, 19, 29, 104, &c.), in history (78, 80, 135), in human conduct, regulated now by a written law (1, 19, 119). He is the ruler of the world, and though He is slow to anger and plenteous in mercy, He will surely punish the wicked, whether they are heathen oppressors outside or arrogant apostates within the nation (97, 37). One of the noblest expressions of this later theology regarding the greatness and extent of Yahweh's power is 139, and even here we have a flaming hatred of "the enemies of Yahweh." The so-called "penitential Psalms," and others of similar tone (32, 51, &c.), show a deep sense of personal sinfulness, deepened by the burden of sickness or other afflictions. Here the theory of sorrow as the result of sin is working in a wholesome way of self-application begetting penitence. In other poems (73, &c.) this theory is faced as a problem from the point of view of its application to life, in the spirit of the struggles of Job. We may say, then, that all possible religious beliefs and moods of that time find expression here. They cannot be harmonized into one system; they express a many-sided life. Running through all there is the conviction that the Israelites are a peculiar people, who have inherited a noble tradition and who stand in a special relationship to the God of the world. This God is to be worshipped and honoured in the services of the Temple and by the diligent student of His Law. He is a righteous God, not only in the sense that He regards moral distinctions, but also that He will keep His covenant and de-