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REVIEW SECTION.

I.—THE TWO-EDGED SWORD IN THE PSALMS.

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THE Psalms reveal to us the believer's faith in God and His word. They show us how, under the Old Testament, pious men felt toward God and lived to God; what they learned from the word of God and by experience of life to Him. They are the prayers and hymns of hearts that confess to God their sins, their fears, their sorrows, their joys, their needs—all the phases of the life of God in the soul: the deep distress, the thirst after righteousness, the calmness of assurance and peace, the exultant gladness of gratitude and love. In the Psalms, we stand in the Holy Place of the Tabernacle of the Most High, beside the golden altar, touched with blood, and see the believer pour out from the golden bowl of his heart precious incense to Him who is throned above the cherubim within the veil.

There are religious poems extant more ancient than any of the Psalms. The Egyptians and Babylonians have left hymns and prayers which bear a striking resemblance to the Psalms in many respects, but they differ from the Psalms totally in the two most important points, as to God and His character, as to man and his sin. Their many gods were spotted with sin; the best of them—Osiris—was not free from the defilement of the flesh. And the sin of man, while it excited dark fears, yet was not to them exceeding sinful and hopeless.

But in the Psalms God is the only God, the only Creator. "He is to be feared above all gods, for all the gods of the peoples are things of naught; but Jehovah made the heavens." "Thou art exalted far above all gods"; "their idols are silver and gold, the work of men's hands . . . they that make them shall be like unto them." There is no other God; "Thou art God alone." Together with this absolute monotheism there is conjoined the conception of God as holy—that is, He is unique in perfection, far separate from every thought that could stain the chastity of His moral being or spot His glorious majesty.