

PART I.

GENEALOGY OF THE MESSIAS.

CHAPTER I.

THE MESSIAS IS THE SON OF GOD. Ps. II.

INTRODUCTION.

1. POSITION OF Ps. II.—In several Hebrew manuscripts the first and second psalms are united so as to form only one psalm; in others the second stands first in numerical order. The Greek editions of the New Testament by Erasmus, Bengel, and Griesbach consider our first psalm as a kind of introduction to the whole psalter, and begin their numbering with our second psalm. They do so on the authority of several Latin and Greek Fathers, who quote the seventh verse of Ps. ii. as occurring in Ps. i. But the greater number of manuscripts and editions of the New Testament, the Vulgate and the Oriental versions among the rest, quote the passage as taken from Ps. ii. A few manuscripts omit the number entirely (cf. Acts xiii. 33).

2. STRUCTURE OF Ps. II.—In the Hebrew text this psalm consists of four stanzas, the first three of which contain seven trochaic hexasyllabic verses each, while the fourth

numbers eight. In the first stanza the psalmist beholds a multitude of kings and nations in rebellion against Jehovah and his Anointed; in the second Jehovah derides the insurgents, and declares that he has established his Anointed as king in Sion; in the third the Anointed claims an absolute dominion over all the nations of the earth by right of inheritance; in the fourth the psalmist exhorts the kings to serve and fear Jehovah, in order to escape his angry vengeance (cf. Cheyne, "Book of Psalms," pp. 3 f.).

3. AUTHOR OF THE PSALM.—Opinions: 1.—The psalm was written by Asaph, the prophet, when the Ammonites and other nations, in league with them, conspired against the kingdom of Israel and the king Josaphat (II. Paral. xx. Rüdinger). There is no solid foundation for this opinion.

2. The author is an unknown person, who speaks of one of the later Hebrew kings (Hensler). But greater power and glory is predicted of Sion's anointed king than were enjoyed by any of the kings of Juda or Israel after Solomon's time.

3. Nathan the prophet wrote the second psalm at the time when Adonias, the son of David by Haggith, exalted himself, saying: "I will be king" (III. Kings i. 5). The psalmist intended to prevent the meditated rebellion by persuading his countrymen to embrace the interests of their divinely appointed king, Solomon (Anonym. author). But even if we grant that the word "kings" may designate persons ambitious of becoming kings, we cannot understand how it can apply to Adonias alone, or how the word "Gentiles" (Goyim in Hebrew) can be used of the Israelitic tribes. The denunciations too are of a severer character than they would have been had they been addressed to the Jews.

4. The opinion that Ps. ii. was written by Solomon (Ewald, Paulus, Bleek, etc.), or by Ezechias (Maurer), or by Isaias, or at the time of Isaias (Delitzsch), hardly needs to be discussed, since the reasons establishing the psalm's

true authorship will sufficiently answer all the arguments of our opponents.

5. King David is the author of the second psalm. Proofs: *a.* In Acts iv. 25 the beginning of Ps. ii. is introduced with the words, "who by the Holy Ghost, by the mouth of our father David, thy servant, hath said." Compare also Acts xiii. 33, 34. *b.* The first forty, or, according to the Hebrew text, the first forty-one psalms constitute what is known as the first book of the psalter, which was, according to the more common opinion, written by David. In the Hebrew text thirty-seven psalms out of the forty-one are ascribed to David in the titles of the Psalms. *c.* The second psalm is very similar to Ps. cix. (cx.), which latter was beyond all doubt composed by David (cf. Ps. ii. 7 and cix. 2, 5, 6). *d.* Supposing the Messianic character of the second psalm, which we shall establish in the next paragraph, its description of the anointed king fits very well into the time of David. *e.* Jewish tradition, too, ascribes the psalm to David, as may be seen from the words of Solomon Jarchi and David Kimchi. If Aben Ezra ascribes it to "some of the minstrels," still he insists that it has reference "to David at the time when he was chosen king." Driver (Introduction to the Literat. O. T., pp. 362 f., note) does not consider that David is both prophet and king.

4. SUBJECT OF THE PSALM.—The subject of the second psalm is identical with the "anointed king." Opinions: 1. All Catholics must hold that the "anointed king" is, at least, a type of the Messiah; that, therefore, the subject of the psalm, at least in its typical meaning, is Christ Jesus. Reasons: *a.* Such is the tradition of the Synagogue Jarchi says: "Our doctors expound this psalm as having reference to King Messiah; but in accordance with the literal sense, and that it may be used against the heretics [i.e., the Christians,] it is proper that it be explained as relating to David himself." David Kimchi expresses himself as follows in the exposition of this psalm: "There

are some," says he, "who expound this psalm as referring to Gog and Magog; and that the anointed king is the Messiah. Our doctors of blessed memory thus expounded it, and the psalm so explained is very perspicuous; yet it seems more reasonable to think that David composed it in reference to himself, and in this sense we have accordingly explained it" (cf. Coroll. 1A). *b.* Christian tradition agrees on this point with the Jewish; the Fathers of the Church have made use of the second psalm in proving the divinity of Christ against the Arians (cf. Kilber, "Analysis Biblia," ii. 8, 2d ed.). *c.* The psalm is applied to Christ in the New Testament (cf. Acts iv. 25-27; xiii. 33; Heb. i. 5; v. 5; Apoc. xix. 15).

2. Many Catholic and some Protestant commentators maintain that the anointed king and all that is said of him refers literally to the Messiah. Reasons: *a.* From the above cited passages of Jarchi and Kimchi it appears that such was the Jewish tradition. *b.* The whole psalm in its literal sense well agrees with the Messiah; the literal sense of several of its clauses cannot apply to any one else, e.g., "this day have I begotten thee," and "I will give thee the Gentiles for thy inheritance, and the utmost parts of the earth for thy possession." *c.* The fact that the terms "Christ" (Messiah) and "Son of God" became proper names of the expected Redeemer (John iv. 25; i. 49) is owing to the second psalm. This is also another proof that the Jews understood the psalm in its literal sense of the Messiah. *d.* Ps. cix. (cx.), which is similar to Ps. ii., is commonly explained as referring in its literal sense to the Messiah. A like explanation must then be given of the second psalm.

3. Patrizi is of opinion that part of the psalm taken in its literal sense applies to the Messiah, part to King Solomon. The reasons given in the preceding paragraph lead him to the partial Messianic interpretation, while the words of the prophet Nathan, "I will be to him a father, and he shall be to me a son" (II. Kings vii. 14), spoken as

they are of Solomon, establish in his opinion the Solomonic relation of the psalm. Thus type and anti-type are blended into one.

4. Some expositors have thought that Solomon is the king celebrated in this song (Ewald, Bleek, etc.). Reasons: *a.* In II. Kings vii. 13, 14, Solomon is called "son of God." *b.* Among all the kings of Israel Solomon was the only one, so far as we know, who, after being anointed at the fountain Gihon, was brought up with royal pomp to Mount Sion. *c.* It may be supposed that in the beginning of Solomon's reign the subdued surrounding nations would attempt to free themselves from the power of the Israelite king. This rebellion, being of but short duration, has not been mentioned in any of Israel's historical books. This last reason, however, is nothing but a gratuitous conjecture in support of a favorite hypothesis. It is stated in explicit terms in III. Kings v. 4, 5 and I. Paral. xxii. 9 that Solomon's reign was a period of profound peace. Again Ps. lxxxviii. 27, 28 promises that God will make David his "first-born, high above the kings of the earth." The above reasons, then, do not prove that the second psalm, in its literal meaning, must apply to Solomon.

5. Another class of writers maintains that David is the subject of the second psalm. Reasons: *a.* David is often called the anointed, as in II. Kings xii. 7; Ps. xix. (xx.) 7. *b.* David wielded his royal power on Mount Sion (I. Par. xv. 1; xvi. 1). *c.* There were several periods in David's reign that agree with the description given in the psalm: 1. The period when David was attacked by the army of the Philistines, after he had taken the stronghold of the Jebusites (Jarchi, Kimchi) (cf. II. Kings v. 20). 2. When David had gained the victory over the Philistines, Moabites, Syrians, and the other neighboring nations (cf. II. Kings viii. 1-15) (Grotius, Möller, etc.). 3. When the Benjamites together with Saul's family supported Ishboeth against David (Döderlein). 4. When David's son Absalom conspired against his father (Kuinoel, etc.).

d. The psalmist, whom we have identified with David, writes as of actual and present occurrences. But we must remember, on the one hand, that the prophetic vision commonly presents future scenes as actually present; we must consider, on the other, that at the time of the first of the above victories over the Philistines Sion was not as yet the Holy Mount, since the ark of the covenant did not then rest on Sion (cf. II. Kings vi. 1). As to the subsequent victories of David, they did not subdue rebellious nations, previously subject to David's sway, as the psalm describes it; but they were gained over the independent surrounding tribes and the members of his own family. Though David was anointed he did not receive his consecration on Mount Sion, but first in Bethlehem and later at Hebron (I. Kings xvi. 1-3; II. Kings ii. 1-4).

To sum up, the second psalm was written by David, and refers to the Messiah, probably in its literal sense. By this is not excluded the opinion that some particular external occurrence or a chain of such occurrences was the immediate occasion of the psalm. Nor is the opinion of those writers who apply the psalm only in its typical sense to Christ destitute of probability. Delitzsch (Commentar über den Psalter, vol. i. p. 9) well expresses the result of his investigation. "The question concerning the person of the Anointed," he says, "need not detain us long; for in the labyrinth of opinions one point remains certain beyond all doubt: that the person of the Anointed, in whom the whole psalm centres, appears in that divine splendor of power which the prophet predicted of the Messiah. Whether it be a present or a future king . . . who is thus considered in the light of the Messianic prophecies, in either case the Anointed is according to the psalmist's mind the person of the Messiah" (cf. Cheyne, "Book of Psalms," p. 4).