A Translation and Commentary of the Book of Psalms for the Use of the Ministry and Laity of the Christian Church

Tholuck August
This is an exact replica of a book. The book reprint was manually improved by a team of professionals, as opposed to automatic/OCR processes used by some companies. However, the book may still have imperfections such as missing pages, poor pictures, errant marks, etc. that were a part of the original text. We appreciate your understanding of the imperfections which can not be improved, and hope you will enjoy reading this book.
A TRANSLATION AND COMMENTARY

OF THE

BOOK OF PSALMS

FOR THE USE OF THE

MINISTRY AND LAYITY OF THE CHRISTIAN CHURCH.

BY

AUGUSTUS THOLUCK, D.D., PH.D.

Translated from the German:

WITH A CAREFUL COMPARISON OF THE PSALM-TEXT
WITH THE ORIGINAL TONGUES.

BY THE

REV. J. ISIDOR MOMBERT.

THY WORD IS A LAMP UNTO MY FEET, AND A LIGHT UNTO MY PATH.—Psalm cxix. 105.

PHILADELPHIA:
WILLIAM S. & ALFRED MARTIEN,
608 CHESTNUT STREET.
1858.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>TABLE OF CONTENTS</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>TRANSLATOR'S PREFACE ........................................ v</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PREFACE TO THE ENGLISH EDITION ............................... ix</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PREFACE TO THE GERMAN EDITION ............................... xiii</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>INTRODUCTION .................................................. 1—56</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sec. I.—The Psalter in the Christian Church .................. 1—14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sec. II.—The form, division, design, and use of the Psalter  in Old Testament Times ................................. 14—22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sec. III.—The Authors of the Psalms .......................... 22—32</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sec. IV.—Doctrine and Ethics of the Psalms ................... 32—56</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I.—God and the Government of the World ...................... 32—36</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>II.—Man and Sin ................................................. 36—39</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>III.—Piety and Morality of the Psalmists ...................... 39—45</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IV.—The Future .................................................. 46—48</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>V.—The Messiah .................................................. 48—56</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>COMMENTARY ..................................................... 57—497</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The fine Christian spirit and unassuming intelligence which pervade the writings of Dr. Tholuck have not only endeared him to theologians and intelligent Christians on the Continent, but secured for him a large number of admirers in this country. Almost all his exegetical writings, with the exception of this Commentary on the Psalms, have long been before the British public. Peculiar difficulties lay in the way, and deterred translators from the execution of the work. These difficulties are referred to by Dr. Tholuck himself in his Preface to this translation: it may not, however, be amiss here to advert to them in brief, so that my position as the translator of this work may from the outset be clearly understood. The text of the Psalms in the German edition is based on that of Luther, with such emendations by Dr. Tholuck as were rendered indispensably necessary by certain inaccuracies which occur in Luther’s version, and other indistinct renderings which obscure the sense and connection. Every one familiar with Luther’s translation knows how much it is at variance with the English authorized version; but Dr. Tholuck’s Commentary is based on the former in its emended condition. A literal translation of Tholuck’s version would have rendered the valuable Commentary to a very great extent useless to English readers, whereas the substitution of the English authorized version for Tholuck’s would have produced an incongruity not less fatal to the use of the work. The only way I could see to meet this difficulty was this. Tholuck’s German work was intended to meet the wants of the German public: the English translation is intended to meet the wants of the British public. Tholuck based his version on Luther’s, which is the popular version in Germany: in my translation I have taken the English authorized
version, printed in parallels, as the base of operation. The principles on which I have sought to harmonize the German version with the English and Dr. Tholuck's Commentary have been the following:

First: Never to alter when the two versions corresponded in sense.

Second: Whenever the original Hebrew warranted a rendering different from that in the English authorized version, which had been adopted by Dr. Tholuck, and furnished a new idea, or one which the English version would not have suggested, to put it either in brackets in the text of the Psalms or in separate foot-notes.

Third: Not to undertake any alteration without having, besides the versions of Luther, Tholuck, and other eminent German versionists, diligently consulted and carefully weighed the Hebrew original, the Septuagint, and the Vulgate versions.

The version thus obtained harmonizes with that of Tholuck, resembles sufficiently the English authorized version to bring the alterations which have been undertaken into prominent relief, from the fact that the smallest divergence from the latter will at once arrest the attention of the English Bible reader, and though it does not state the detailed steps of criticism, furnishes its results. How far Dr. Tholuck, to whom a portion of the sheets have been submitted, approves of the way in which I have endeavoured to meet these difficulties, will be seen from the following passage, which occurs in his last communication to me: "I have gained the conviction from the sheets which lie before me, that you are perfectly capable of meeting, as well as it can be done, the difficulty arising from the relation of my translation to the English authorized version."

The Introduction will be found peculiarly valuable to Bible students.

The chief merits of the Commentary consist in the highly spiritual strain of its devotion, its concise and suggestive intelligence, and rich historical and illustrative character. There are many ministers who have not the time to enter into the learned and
critical disquisitions which fill the pages of more voluminous works, while there are others who have no relish for critical treatises and contentions with Hebrew roots. Neither of these classes will consult Tholuck in vain. But all ministers and laymen, who wish to raise their own devotion and refresh their spirits by listening to the sweet Psalmist of Israel, will find that much of the Psalmist’s holy flame has been caught by his German commentator, and that he understands to touch cords which must elicit sympathy from every Christian heart. Here is a thoroughly pious but also an intelligent Commentary on the Psalms, which I consider to belong to that kind of books wanted to raise the standard of religious instruction, and to impress the minds of the many with the fact, that religion is not insipid, and engages no less the affections than the understanding.

I have adopted a different arrangement from that of the German volume: there the Psalm-text is followed by the Introduction and the Commentary, while in the English edition the Introduction and analysis precede the Psalm-text, and the Commentary succeeds it. Ministers and students in particular, who often require the historical references and illustrative matter, or the bare outline of thought of a psalm, will find this arrangement, which presents the introductory matter separate from the exegetical, very advantageous.

The verses of the Psalm-text correspond to the verses in the German edition, which agrees with the versic division adopted in the Hebrew, the Septuagint, and the Vulgate, but often differs from that which prevails in the English authorized version, in which the titles are generally given in a separate form, whereas in the original tongues they are always counted as verses. The same remark applies also to the references to various portions of the book of Psalms.

Respecting the translation of the Commentary, I have endeavoured to follow closely the sense of the original, and having caught the German idiom, to express it in an English idiomatic form. I have done so from the conviction that a slavish adherence to the words renders many translations from the German obscure and heavy. I know, from a comparison of several English transla-
tions with their German originals, that in very many instances the epithet "misy," which is so lavishly fastened upon German works, ought more appropriately to be laid to the charge of the translators, who have sometimes furnished literal translations, which to understand, however, transcends the capacity not only of English readers, but of the very authors of the works. I know German authors who, though good English Scholars, have been utterly unable to identify the English translations of their works as their own productions, and expressed their astonishment that their translations could sell.

It has been my humble endeavour to do justice to Dr. Tholuck and to the British public, but must not be considered to subscribe to all the views set forth by the author. My prayer is, that the blessing of God may attend the perusal of this Commentary in the study, the closet, and the family, and that the lofty conceptions, the humble penitence, the strong faith, and the silent resignation of the royal bard, may charm the minds and captivate the hearts of the readers, and prove as beneficial to them as the study of this work has been to me. The example of the Psalmists, who lived more than a thousand years before the advent of our Lord, who were confined to the law and the shadow of things to come, and had only dim views of the glory so clearly revealed to us in the gospel, has often put me to the blush, and tended, I trust, to deepen my convictions of sin, and to increase my faith in the Lord Jesus Christ. May such be the experience of all who read this book!

I beg here thankfully to record my gratitude to Dr. Tholuck for his readiness in writing a preface to this translation, and to acknowledge the kindness and encouragement I have received from many friends while this work was in progress.

J. ISIDOR MOMBERT.
HAVING been invited by the translator of this Commentary to write a Preface to the English version, it affords me pleasure from the outset to familiarize the British public with my object in laying this Commentary before the public of my native country.

Debarred of the privilege of Christian instruction and Christian example, I shared, up to my nineteenth year, the then prevalent rationalistic views. My scientific (theological) studies did not result in my conversion to the faith of the gospel. It was brought about by the instrumentality of a noble Christian layman, who belonged to the small number of those who, under the influence of Matthias Claudius of Hamburg, and the cooperation of the brethren (unitas fratum,) had in that period of universal infidelity kept alive the faith in the word of God's truth. His luminous example of a Christian walk, more than what he told me, led me to think, and assured me at least of this, that Jesus is the Son of God, and that his doctrine and example make up a complete moral ideal, which man must appropriate for the purpose of attaining to rest and finding peace. Then I believed in Christ; I was able to kneel before him and to pray to him. Then he became the friend of my soul, whom I learned to consult in all things, as I had formerly consulted my conscience. But how far remote was I at that time from the position of a doctrinally correct Christian! Only some portions of the New Testament fell in with my taste:
these were the Gospel of John and the Epistle of James; the Old Testament, I am constrained to make the confession, I loathed, like Marcion of old. I had till that time studied the Oriental languages only. Not a long time after this, I was, without my having taken any steps to that effect, requested by the religious department of Government (*Ministerium des Cultus*) to deliver theological lectures on the Old Testament, in the place of De Wette, who had been deposed. I found myself in a great strait. I went to solicit the help of Neander.

He knew how to meet my doubts and scruples relating to Christianity, with wisdom and gentleness; but though himself a Jew, he shared, respecting the Old Testament, the universally diffused rationalistic views—with this exception, that his religious zeal prompted him to search in its pages for those religious truths which are allied to Christianity. The share of Christian feeling which entered into my faith, placed me in strong opposition to rationalism, and I held it my duty to combat in my lectures on the Old Testament also, every view advanced by the rationalistic school.

I gradually arrived at the conviction that the criticism and exegesis on the Old Testament, as set forth by the old theologians, did not in any way hold good in every instance. I endeavoured for some time, while the struggle between my *religious* and my *scientific* conscience was going on, to justify these old views only; but at last I could no longer continue blind to such a contradiction, and the thing to be done was to reconstruct in a new spirit that old theology, as in fact it had already been done with reference to the New Testament. I derived considerable aid in that task from Calvin’s Commentary on the Psalms: it disclosed to me a religious depth in this one book of the Old Testament, which opened my eyes for many other glories of the Old Testament scriptures.