

## 'The Lord of Hosts.'

By M. GASTER, PH.D., CHIEF RABBI, SPANISH AND PORTUGUESE CONGREGATIONS, LONDON.

'THE LORD OF HOSTS,'—is this translation correct? This is not a new problem. It has been discussed from many points of view. There is a large literature on the subject, which is summed up best in the *Encyclopædia Biblica* (s.v. 'Names,' § 123, col. 3328). But I venture to think that it has not been approached from that point of view in which I wish to present it. Is the tradition unanimous which sanctions this construction and the translation of the word 'Sabaoth' in this connexion, as an appellation in the meaning of 'Hosts'?

For a long time I have been struck by the appearance of 'Sabaoth' as a separate, definite name among the names of God in mystical conjurations and magical formulæ. Whatever one may think of these mystical speculations and peculiar vagaries of teachers of occult science, there cannot be any doubt that they have preserved to us some ancient traditions of an esoteric character.

I have come to this conclusion after a long investigation of these magical documents among Jews, Samaritans, and other sects. It is obvious that those who expected thaumaturgical results from their manipulations of the divine name would have taken care to use that name and every other divine name in complete accord with the tradition of such names. They would not use a mere attribute of God as a proper name. We do not find in any magical formulæ which contain lists of divine names any one among them such as 'merciful,' 'gracious,' etc. (Ex 34<sup>6</sup>), used as if it were a name; on the contrary, we find regularly the name 'Sabaoth,' standing by itself and considered of equal value with such other names as El, Elohim, Adonai, Shaddai, and even the Tetragrammaton. It is evident that to the authors of those ancient magical invocations and conjurations 'Sabaoth' did not mean 'the God of hosts,' but was taken as a name, quite independent of what its real meaning may originally have been. The Greek magical papyri abound in that name (*vide* Wessely, *Ephesia Grammata*, Wien, 1886 *passim*).

Of no less importance is the testimony of the Gnostic authors of Pistis Sophia, 'The Words of Jeu,' and of the anonymous treatises which have

been published in German translation from the Koptic by C. Schmidt (*Koptisch-Gnostische Schriften*, Leipzig, 1905). Sabaoth the Great and the Small are recognized divine spirits, nay, in some instances they are called 'The Father of Jesus' (*vide* Index, s.v.). The Word is taken as a Name of God, a manifestation of God, and not as meaning a 'Host' or 'Hosts.' The original meaning of the word had already been lost, if it had ever been connected with it in the combination IHVH Sabaoth. No less clear is it that this word was considered equivalent with 'IHVH' from the 'Ialdabaoth' of the Gnostics, so prominent in the above-mentioned Gnostic texts (*vide* Index, s.v.). [This is the outcome of the combination: 'Yah-el-Sabaoth' the  $\text{šade}$  of the original Hebrew was probably pronounced more like the Arabic  $\text{d}$  differentiated in writing only by a dot and pronounced more like the Greek sibilant  $\text{f}$  and then hardened into  $\text{d}$  by people who could not pronounce the letter properly.] The rôle assigned to Ialdabaoth falls little short of that assigned to God Himself, and no attempt is made to see in it 'The God of hosts,' but only 'God Sabaoth.'

This has remained the unchanged form in all magical conjurations and amulets down to Agrippa, Faust's *Höllenzwang*, in the collection of such conjurations tolerated by the Catholic Church (*Thesaurus Exorcismorum Coloneæ*, 1626) there are numerous examples in which the name 'Sabaoth' figures along with the other well-known names of God, among them also 'Omega' and 'Alpha.'

The numerous 'Keys of Solomon' and the 'Sixth and Seventh Book of Moses,' and 'Great Grimoires,' etc., bring this tradition down to our days.

All throughout we find 'Sabaoth nomen Dei,' as the author of the *Thesaurus Exorcismorum*, p. 53, explains.

If we turn now to the Biblical Scriptures we find 'The Lord Sabaoth' twice mentioned in the N.T. (Ro 9<sup>29</sup> and Ja 5<sup>4</sup>). In both cases A.V. and R.V. leave the last word 'Sabaoth' untranslated, just as it is in the Greek, where it has not been translated into 'Host' or 'Hosts,' but has been retained in the original Hebrew form.

The authors of the Epistles thus show us that they also did not take this word to stand in any grammatical connexion with the preceding 'Lord,' and that it was, as it were, a peculiar name of God. As such it was not to be translated, but it was only to be transcribed into Greek letters.

It is surprising that in both cases the A.V. and R.V. translate 'The Lord of Sabaoth.' There is no apparent justification for such a construction.

If we turn now to the O.T. we shall be met by some remarkable facts concerning the use of this divine name.

Coming to the O.T., M. Lohr (*Untersuchungen zum Buch Amos*, Giessen, 1901, p. 38ff.) has grouped together all the passages in which IHVH Sabaoth appears either only as I.S. or in combination with Elohim or Elohē, with and without the article. He has given also in parallel columns the version of the LXX.

We find that 'The Lord of Sabaoth' is not mentioned even *once* throughout the whole of the Pentateuch, Joshua, and Judges. The first time these two words are mentioned is 1 S 1<sup>9</sup>, then sporadically in the other historical books such as Kings and Chronicles. It is then used very frequently by Isaiah, Jeremiah, Zechariah, and Malachi. In the other minor prophets it occurs in most of them sporadically, and even then in a modified form. So also out of the one hundred and fifty psalms the use of it is limited to six, and even then not in an unmixed form. It does not occur once in the other books of the Hagiographa, neither in Daniel, Ezra, and Nehemiah, nor Job and Proverbs, nor in any of the five Strolls (Ecclesiastes, Songs, Esther, Lamentations, and Ruth). But what is still more surprising is that it is not used once by the prophet Ezekiel. Surely there must be some reason for this very curious phenomenon. Why should it not have been used by the authors of the Pentateuch, Joshua, and Judges, and why should the prophet Ezekiel in contradistinction to all the other prophets avoid systematically using a phrase which occurs in the writings of Isaiah and Jeremiah scores of times? No satisfactory explanation has, as far as I am aware, yet been given. I can only advance a tentative one.

It is obvious that this change of name, which starts from the sanctuary in Shiloh, is mentioned for the first time in connexion therewith (1 S 1<sup>9</sup>). It connotes a deliberate departure from

another usage, and is a distinct cleavage between the nomenclature of the preceding books, and no doubt also with the preceding practice. It is henceforth associated very closely with the school of the prophets, and finds its votaries mostly, if not exclusively, among those to whom Jerusalem becomes the holy city, and the temple therein the sanctuary of the Lord.

The prophets and priests from the time of Samuel onward make regular use of it. If this phrase denotes a deliberate departure from another usage, then we must try to find a corresponding phrase in the other books for which this is a substitute. Now, in the first place, it must be pointed out that the word 'Sabaoth' is a plural form. It is probably intended to be a substitution for another word also in the plural. The word remains unchanged. No suffixes or prefixes are added, and, with but rare exceptions, not even the article. It is treated as a proper name, not as an attribute or appellation.

The counterpart to and parallel of Lord Sabaoth is Lord God or IHVH Elohim. Now it is a fact that this combination occurs very often in the Pentateuch, and the use of it dwindles down to rare occasions such as Is 2<sup>11</sup> 7<sup>7</sup>. It is not used in Samuel. In Kings it occurs once (2 K 19<sup>19</sup>), and in Chronicles twice (1 Ch 17<sup>16</sup> 28<sup>20</sup>). Not one single time is the combination IHVH Elohim to be found in Psalms, Proverbs, Ecclesiastes, Isaiah, Hosea, and Amos. Occasionally we get a combination of Elohim and Sabaoth (Ps 80<sup>8, 15</sup>); Am 4<sup>13</sup> 5<sup>14</sup> 15<sup>6</sup> has Elohē Sabaoth. In these we may see the transition stage, for verily the form Sabaoth is intended by the prophets, who used it in conjunction with IHVH, to take the place of Elohim.

It is further to be noted that whilst Elohim is declined and suffixes are often added to it, the word Sabaoth, as already remarked, retains its rigid inflexibility throughout the Bible. Only when combined with Elohē in the stat. constr. in the three passages in which these two words appear thus combined, the article ה is added to Sabaoth: so Hos 12<sup>7</sup>, Am 3<sup>13</sup> 6<sup>14</sup>, against which there are to be set down the other passages Am 4<sup>13</sup> 5<sup>14, 18, 26</sup> 6<sup>8</sup>, where we have Elohē Sabaoth without the article. All this cannot be a mere accident. There must be a deeper reason for what I believe to be the substitution of Sabaoth for Elohim carried out so consistently by the great prophets Isaiah and

Jeremiah, and adhered to by Zechariah and Malachi. The form of the word Sabaoth is highly significant. Though in the plural form it corresponds entirely with the plural form of Elohim, none the less it is never felt as such. It was a technical term—a name—the grammatical form of which was entirely ignored.

Concerning the ancient versions the LXX show a difference of treatment. Whilst he who translates Isaiah merely transcribed the word, the translators of other books gave the Greek equivalent for 'Host.' We have here evidently two traditions, Jerome agreeing also with the latter, but the Targum never attempts to translate the word but retains it unchanged in its Hebrew form, and so does practically the Peshitta.

The teachers in the schools of the prophets must mark a certain advance in the attempt of eliminating from the notions connected with God anything which might lead the people to retain false ideas. They must have been anxious to remove everything that might become a 'stumbling-block before the blind.' They may have felt a difficulty arising out of the combination of the Ineffable Name IHVH, by which alone God was to be designated, with any Elohim, a title which could be applied indiscriminately to any heathen god.

The word 'Elohim' lends itself to a wide application. It was necessary to limit the application and so to circumscribe the name of God as to exclude any possible confusion between the Lord and the gods.

Of course such a change had to be made very gradually. It did not obtain at once general sanction, nor could it at once eliminate the popular use of Lord and Elohim. Hence the vacillation notable among some of the minor prophets and the occasional lapses in Isaiah and Jeremiah, although they adhere most rigorously to the phrase 'Lord Sabaoth.'

When we reach the time of the Exile, we find on the one side Zechariah and Malachi adhering also strictly to the use sanctioned by the greater prophets; but on the other hand, neither the authors of the Psalms countenance such use, nor what is no less important the prophet Ezekiel.

At that time the wave of idolatry had spent itself. There was no longer any fear that the people might turn to heathen gods to worship.

This prophet takes up an attitude totally unlike that of any other prophet. He goes much further.

Not once does he use the phrase 'Lord Sabaoth,' and he also consistently avoids the other phrase 'Lord Elohim.'

Both Sabaoth and Elohim are eliminated, and their place is taken by another phrase in which the constituent parts have, so to say, been reversed. In order to come to some more definite result it is advisable to enlarge the scope of the investigation and not to limit it, as has hitherto been done, only to IHVH Sabaoth. Other names of God must be drawn within the sphere of research and comparison, especially the use of the name Adonāi, whose meaning is perfectly transparent and not open to any doubt or misunderstanding. The root *Adon* means simply 'master.' It is well known that this latter has become the equivalent in pronunciation for the Ineffable IHVH. This word Adonāi for the name of God is used in most of the books of the Bible. Though not frequent, it is not unknown in the Pentateuch, where it occurs six times.

Among the other books it occurs in Isaiah twenty-one times, and in Psalms no less than forty-four times, whilst curiously enough it never occurs in Jeremiah, but is found no less than thirteen times in Lamentations! This frequency in Psalms and Lamentations may be due to the use made of these portions of the Bible in the Jewish Liturgy and the desire of the scribes to avoid writing IHVH. In the combination, however, of Adonāi and IHVH, used almost exclusively by Ezekiel, one must recognize a further step in that change which started with the combination of Lord Sabaoth. It is noteworthy that the LXX do *not* translate here the Hebrew word, but transliterate Adonāi; and for IHVH, in spite of the Massoretic vocalization, they translate Kyrios as it is translated in the Bible. It is difficult as yet to suggest the real reason for such a change, but even the use of Sabaoth in conjunction with IHVH may have appeared to Ezekiel still open to some possible misconception, and he therefore eliminated it also from his prophecies and used only names such as would not allow any possible misconception. The remarkable collocation IHVH Adonāi in Hab 3<sup>10</sup> may now be a help to settle the vexed question of the date of this prophecy. It is so much like the use of these elements by Ezekiel, though in a different order.

In this connexion it may not be uninteresting to note that the Samaritans have never used the

phrase IHVH Sabaoth in their whole liturgy. But it is significant that the only occasion on which I have found the Samaritans making use of that phrase is in the mystical phylactery which is now being published by me in the *Proceeds. Bibl. Archaeology*, 1915, p. 96 ff. Thus far we have been able to trace a peculiar history in the use of this phrase.

It is not here the place to discuss the use in the Bible of every name applied to God. A detailed investigation may lead to some surprising results. The only question to be dealt with here is the name *Sabaoth*. It remains now to examine what is the meaning of this word and how it is to be translated, if translated at all. The answer depends to a great extent as to how IHVH Elohim is to be translated. It is, I submit, a complete misconception of the inner development when it is suggested (*vide* Gesenius, Brown, *s.v.* 'Sabaoth,' and *Encyclopædia Biblica*) that Sabaoth is the older, and Elohim the late name given to God. Equally wrong is the translation 'Lord of Hosts,' *i.e.* of the hosts of Israel, and the idea that it originated with the warlike operations of David. Real warlike operations with more important issues were those under Joshua for the conquest of Canaan, and under the Judges when the people were harassed from every side and had to fight for their existence, and yet 'Lord of Hosts' is never used in the books of Joshua and Judges. It can only be understood as a parallel expression to 'Elohim,' and as little as we can say 'The Lord of Elohim' so little can we say 'The Lord of Hosts.' We are just as little helped by knowing that 'Elah' means *God*, as by that of the word 'Saba' meaning *host*. In the plural form in which they are used with a 'singular' significance, they have lost their original meaning and have assumed a certain theological complexion. The intention in both cases has not been to intensify the single name *IHVH*, as has hitherto been universally accepted, by translating the words 'The Lord of Hosts' or 'The Lord God.' The object and aim of these additions to *IHVH* was to create a real apposition and to bring out clearly what *IHVH* was to signify. I have never been able to understand the translation, 'I am the Lord your God,' with which so many commandments in the Bible end. Nay, not even the first commandment in Ex 20<sup>2</sup>. It means nothing new and conveys nothing of any specific character to justify the commandment just given, or to commend it

strongly to the people. If the ending would be 'I am your God' alone it would apparently not alter the significance unless the combination of the two names is intended to convey a specific meaning. The matter is however quite different, when we translate, as I have done, 'I the Lord (*IHVH*) am your God.' Here we have a definite declaration. The people are told that above all the Elohim *IHVH* alone is *The God* of Israel, and it is because of that, that the commandments are to be strictly observed, for the Lord will certainly punish and requite. This is also the meaning of Ex 20<sup>2</sup>, 'I the Lord (*IHVH*) am thy God, who has brought thee out,' etc., *none* other. This would explain why this verse is counted by the Jews as the *first* commandment. It establishes the divinity of *IHVH*, and v.<sup>3</sup> follows then quite logically and consistently, 'Thou shalt have *none other* gods (Elohim) before me, only *IHVH* is *thy* God.' This explanation is still more supported by the great proclamation of the Jewish faith. A.V. and R.V. translate, 'Hear, O Israel, the Lord our God is one Lord.' In my translation of the Hebrew Prayer Book I have rendered this verse, 'Here, O Israel, the Lord is our God, the Lord is one,' for thereby not only the unity of the Lord is proclaimed, but also that the Lord alone is our God, and no other divinity under whatever other name it may go. This explanation can easily be supported by many instances in the Bible, *e.g.* 'thou mightest know that *IHVH* is the Elohim' (Dt 4<sup>35</sup>). This is brought out very emphatically in the great scene on Mt. Carmel (1 K 18) which otherwise loses its point. The prophet Elijah chides the people and bids them decide whether the Lord (*IHVH*) is the God (Elohim), and the people then exclaimed twice, 'The Lord he is the God' (vv. 21. 37. 39). In the light of this interpretation a passage like that in Jer 16<sup>20. 21</sup> receives a new interpretation.

These examples can easily be multiplied, proving that the real translation of *IHVH* Elohim is 'The Lord he is God,' He who is styled the *LORD* alone and none else. In *IHVH* is the collective unity of those powers expressed by Elohim. In precisely the same manner must the phrase *IHVH* Sabaoth be taken as meaning 'The Lord he is Sabaoth'; it is He who represents that collective unity of powers contained in the designation of Sabaoth. The people understood, no doubt, what it was that was meant by the plural 'Sabaoth,' just as well as they understood what was meant by the corresponding

plural 'Elohim.' This new name was made known to the people by the emphatic and often repeated declaration of the prophets who laid stress on it that the Lord Sabaoth is His name. So especially Isaiah and Jeremiah (Is 47<sup>4</sup> 48<sup>2</sup> 51<sup>15</sup> 54<sup>5</sup>, Jer 10<sup>16</sup> 31<sup>36</sup> 32<sup>18</sup> 50<sup>84</sup> 51<sup>19</sup>). It is idle to speculate whether that meaning was a vague one or a definite one. It suffices to have shown that the word remained untranslated, that it was undeclined, and was treated as a proper name. It was certainly not meant to be taken 'as *hosts* in a concrete form either of Israelites or heavenly bodies which never occur in the Bible in this form.'

However poetical and suggestive the translation

'Lord of Hosts' may be—which would, moreover, limit the attributes of God and would make Him the Supreme War-Lord—that translation does not seem to correspond with the true meaning of the phrase IHVH Sabaoth. Whatever the original meaning may have been, it was lost when applied to God, when it became a stereotyped name, and just as little as one would think of translating IHVH Elohim the Lord of Gods, so little, do I submit, can we translate IHVH Sabaoth, The Lord of Hosts. It must be either The Lord (The) Host(s) if it is to be translated at all, or the Lord who is Sabaoth, or rather, following the unbroken tradition of the ages and the old versions—The Lord Sabaoth.

## The Anointing of Jesus.

BY EDWARD GRUBB, M.A., CROYDON.

EACH of the four Gospels contains a story of the anointing of Jesus by a woman (Mt 26<sup>6-13</sup>, Mk 14<sup>3-9</sup>, Lk 7<sup>36-50</sup>, Jn 12<sup>1-8</sup>). The details have undergone considerable confusion, not only in the hands of commentators, but apparently in the actual narratives as we have them; and it may be worth while to try to disentangle them.

There appear to me to be two original narratives, referring to quite different events. The earlier is that of Lk 7<sup>36-50</sup>, where a woman who is a sinner comes into the house of Simon, a Pharisee, while Jesus is reclining at a meal; and, bending over His feet, behind the couch, bedews them with her tears, wipes them with her hair, kisses them passionately, and anoints them with ointment from an 'alabastron' or phial. The latter is that of Mk 14<sup>3-9</sup>, in which, in the house of Simon the leper at Bethany (two days before the final Passover, if v. 1 belongs to the story), an unnamed woman brings an 'alabastron' of ointment of 'pistic nard,' very costly, and, breaking the flask, pours it over the head of Jesus as He reclines at a meal. Some of the disciples are indignant at the waste of the precious ointment, but Jesus vehemently defends the woman's action.

The story in Matthew (26<sup>6-13</sup>) is an almost exact reproduction of that in Mark, with slight compression and a few verbal additions.

In John the narrative is similar to that of Mark, but more names are given. The house in Bethany is the residence of Martha and Mary and Lazarus, and the woman is Mary. Only Judas Iscariot is stated to have objected to the waste of the ointment. The date is fixed at *six* days before the Passover instead of two, and Mary is said to have anointed the *feet* of Jesus, and to have wiped them with her hair. Nothing is said about a flask, but Mary is represented as using 'a pound' of the ointment. Here only are we told that 'the house was filled with the odour.'

There are, I think, indications that the names supplied by the Fourth Evangelist are trustworthy, though he does not enable us to identify the host, whom Mark calls Simon the leper. The actions of the two sisters are quite consistent with the indications of their characters contained in the brief passage Lk 10<sup>38-42</sup>: 'Martha served,' while Mary the dreamer forgot everything but Jesus. But why she should anoint His *feet*, or wipe them with her hair, is hard to understand. Mark's statement, on the other hand, that she poured the ointment over His *head*, as a solemn act of devotion, is quite intelligible. I believe that the Fourth Evangelist has himself confused the two narratives, and has drawn the anointing of the