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978-1-108-06773-7 - An Introduction to the Critical Study and Knowledge of the Holy Scriptures:

Volume 2 – Part 1: The Text of the Old Testament Considered

Thomas Hartwell Horne, Samuel Davidson and Samuel Prideaux Tregelles

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An Introduction to the Critical Study and Knowledge of the Holy Scriptures

A painstaking compiler of catalogues and indexes, the biblical scholar and bibliographer Thomas Hartwell Horne (1780–1862) first published his most famous work in 1818, having begun his research for it many years earlier in 1801. Reissued here is the expanded four-volume tenth edition of 1856, which includes revisions by the scholars Samuel Davidson (c.1806–98) and Samuel Prideaux Tregelles (1813–75). This monumental and influential work of nineteenth-century biblical scholarship remains a valuable resource for modern researchers. Volume 2, the work of Davidson, addresses the Old Testament and has been split into two parts for this reissue. Influenced by contemporary German scholarship, Davidson's contribution caused controversy, particularly around prophetic authorship and the role of divine inspiration, resulting in his resignation from Lancashire Independent College. Indeed, Horne distanced himself from this volume. Part 1 includes discussion of scriptural Hebrew, of Greek, Arabic, Latin and Syriac translations, and of textual history and interpretation.

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AN
INTRODUCTION
TO THE
CRITICAL STUDY AND KNOWLEDGE
OF THE
HOLY SCRIPTURES.

BY
THE REV. THOMAS HARTWELL HORNE, B.D.
OF SAINT JOHN'S COLLEGE, CAMBRIDGE;
D.D. OF THE UNIVERSITY OF PENNSYLVANIA;
RECTOR OF THE UNITED PARISHES OF SAINT EDMUND THE KING AND MARTYR
AND SAINT NICHOLAS ACONS, LOMBARD STREET;
PREBENDARY OF SAINT PAUL'S.

TENTH EDITION,
REVISED, CORRECTED, AND BROUGHT DOWN TO THE PRESENT TIME.

Edited by
THE REV. THOMAS HARTWELL HORNE, B.D.
(THE AUTHOR);
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AND
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AUTHOR OF "REMARKS ON THE PRINTED TEXT OF THE GREEK NEW TESTAMENT," ETC.

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THE
T E X T
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THE OLD TESTAMENT
CONSIDERED;
WITH
A TREATISE ON SACRED INTERPRETATION;
AND A
BRIEF INTRODUCTION TO THE OLD TESTAMENT BOOKS AND
THE APOCRYPHA.

BY SAMUEL DAVIDSON, D.D.

OF THE UNIVERSITY OF HALLE, AND LL.D.

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P R E F A C E.

THE writer of the present volume has endeavoured to discuss the contents in a manner consistent with the general scope of the work to which it belongs. It consists of three parts; the first, relating to the text of *the Old Testament*, or biblical criticism, as far as that portion of the sacred volume is concerned; the second, belonging to the interpretation of the Bible generally, exhibiting a system of Sacred Hermeneutics; and the third, containing an Introduction to the Old Testament as well as the Apocrypha. It was expected of the author that he should not exceed the space allotted to these topics in the last edition of the whole work; and that they should be conformed to the present state of knowledge regarding them. The first division is very briefly discussed, because the author had already written on it in his "Treatise on Biblical Criticism," to which he has often referred for more extended information. Little has been added to the science since that work appeared; and therefore it seemed unnecessary to repeat the same things in nearly the same words. What *is* now written, however, originated in independent thought; and should it be found to differ from the "Biblical Criticism" in any point, it must be accepted as the author's *latest* view. On the subject of Hermeneutics, an extended treatise was also published by the writer in the year 1843; where a history of biblical interpretation is given till the time of the Reformation, which will always retain its value. Though the space here

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devoted to this important branch is much less ; he hopes that the present treatise, as far as it goes, is an improvement on the larger. He has laboured, at least, to make it so. In some respects it will not *supersede*, but *supplement*, its predecessor ; the wish of the writer being that *both* should be consulted ; and that the reader should follow the last in preference to the first work, except where the older occupies independent ground of its own.

The copious list of quotations from the Old Testament in the New, with accompanying notes and discussions, belongs both to criticism and interpretation. Much thought and labour have been expended on this portion ; which the writer believes to be far superior to the corresponding part of the “ Sacred Hermeneutics.”

Two hundred and fifty pages were allowed for an Introduction to the Old Testament and Apocrypha. This fact is sufficient to show that a full and satisfactory discussion of all the topics connected with so many books could not be furnished. Indeed, the third division alone would require four volumes to do it ample justice. The difficulties connected with it are so many and perplexing, that abundant room should be free for an exhaustive treatment. But the author has done what he could ; and it is hoped that nothing of moment has been left unnoticed. Unless he is greatly mistaken, no essential point has been neglected ; for which purpose he was compelled to exceed the two hundred and fifty pages. Here, perhaps, it may be thought that the author has had undue regard to Keil’s book ; but *the latest* Introduction to the Old Testament deserves to be specially considered. That it is the best, no scholar acquainted with De Wette’s can ever suppose. It is not characterised by original investigation, independent inquiry, or high critical ability ; for it is mainly based on Hengstenberg and Hävernick, with such other writers as come nearest

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to their stand-point. As far as the present writer can judge, the Dorpat Professor has not advanced Old Testament criticism and interpretation by his retrograde book; nor can the extreme ground of Hengstenberg and his followers, in relation to many parts of the Hebrew Scriptures, stand the test of an impartial exegesis. Like all attempts to roll back the tide of steadily advancing inquiry, it must prove ineffectual. With that progressive march of investigation the candid reader will go hand in hand as far as it is safe, regulating its course, and restraining its excesses, that it may prove reliable. It is right that the theologian should be conservative, as far as he may out of deference to truth: he is wrong in showing an obstinate conservatism which shuts out the light because it proceeds from a suspicious quarter. Let him not be afraid of the fate of a revelation coming from God to man: the word of the Lord abideth for ever; triumphant over the waves of opposition and the assaults of infidelity. By that word let him hold fast, distinguishing the human and the divine in the Scriptures — the divine essence, alike imperishable and immutable; the human form, which is necessarily imperfect.

The manner in which the subjects had to be treated was not less perplexing than the matter. As the book was not meant for the learned alone but for intelligent students of the Bible, a half-popular cast was the most fitting. It was neither to be entirely popular and superficial; nor altogether learned and critical; but of an intermediate character. The difficulty of attaining this medium is great; and the author does not presume to think that he has always secured it. Some topics are of a nature to make it impossible, as parts of the book will show. It will be observed, that the Apocrypha is treated somewhat out of proportion, because correct information on the subject is rare. Hence the account of these books was lengthened. Probably this feature will not detract from the value of the work.

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It is hoped that candid and competent judges will approve of the present attempt to produce a brief Introduction to the Old Testament adapted to the present state of knowledge on the subject. The task is very delicate. Here especially the responsibility of the work was felt. The author feared that prejudice and ignorance would be arrayed against him. He was aware that he should be confronted with traditional opinions. But he can honestly say, that he sought to follow *truth* amid all his speculations. Alive as he was to the sacredness of truth, he endeavoured to keep as near to it as he could. If, therefore, he has cut away some of the traditional fat of hereditary sentiments, he hopes that *the diseased alone* has been removed. Yet he can hardly expect to escape censure from parties wedded to antiquated notions. If attacked, it is far from his intention to reply; since he has lived long enough to know that fighting for religious opinions is of little benefit. And indeed he is in no mood to heed the strictures of men, while listening to the painful lesson of affliction and adopting the language of the Psalmist, "*God* hath spoken once; twice have I heard this; that power belongeth unto *God*." Henceforward he would rather nestle in the consolations of religion than dispute about things which may have little relation to spiritual life. For he is firmly persuaded that pure religion concerns the emotions more than the intellect. In the feelings and aspirations of the heart it finds its best element; the deductions of the intellect being but remotely related. It is not necessary that the fellowship of the spirit with God should be interrupted or marred by the investigations of historical criticism into the books of Scripture. As the Church has her appropriate department in awakening spiritual life, assimilating it to the great Fountain of blessedness, and raising it to the highest attainable perfection in the present world; so scientific criticism has its own

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field in which it may *freely* range as long as it leaves the *word of God* — that divine aliment which alone sustains the soul by becoming its very life — uninjured and entire.

As the writer dislikes dogmatism and has rebuked it, he would be the last person to make the least approach to an assumption of infallibility. The more he reflects, he sees more of the difficult and mysterious in divine things. God has placed man in circumstances that require all the faith he can exercise to guide him to a higher sphere, amid the unsearchable dispensations of Providence. Besides, the Bible itself is a difficult book. He has therefore learned to distrust his own judgment and look for light from above.

The first two portions of the volume were printed more than a year ago, and therefore it was too late to use in their composition several recent treatises. But the references generally are somewhat sparing, conformably to the nature of the book. As it was written for a numerous class of readers the multiplication of allusions to works English, German, and French, was thought undesirable.

The writer alone is responsible for all to which his name is prefixed. None of his fellow labourers is accountable for anything in *his* portion.

In conclusion, the author is deeply impressed with a sense of the gratitude he owes to the great Author of revelation for enabling him to complete this book. A task involving labour and anxiety of no ordinary kind emphatically needed such help. Prosecuted as it was amid some circumstances unfavourable to mental abstraction, he cannot but be thankful that it is finished. Blessed be God who has supported him thus far! Never did he feel more solemnly the force of the Psalmist's saying, "I am a stranger with thee and a sojourner, as all my fathers were." His friends Gieseler and Lücke are gone; masters in their respective departments, their work on earth is over. The accomplished Hare, who

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would have looked most kindly on this book, is taken to his reward, leaving the English Church to mourn the loss of so great an ornament. And death has touched the writer still more closely by removing his eldest surviving son, in whom the best elements of a manly character, in connection with superior tastes, had begun to develop themselves.* But “there is a victory that overcometh the world, even our faith.”

* Sinclair Davidson, after a lingering illness, was taken at the age of 17 years, on the 27th of April, to be for ever with Christ; leaving behind satisfactory evidence of his personal salvation.

Independent College,
Manchester, May 17th, 1856.

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