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### Text Books for Old Testament Study

John Merlin Powis Smith Ph.D.<sup>a</sup>

<sup>a</sup> The University of Chicago

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## **Text Books for Old Testament Study**

**Suitable for use in Academies, High Schools and Colleges**

**JOHN MERLIN POWIS SMITH, Ph.D.**

*The University of Chicago*

One of the greatest needs of the literature of religious education is a series of text-books upon the Old Testament, adapted to the needs of students in colleges, academies, high-schools, and adult Bible classes. There is an abundance of technical literature upon the Old Testament; nor is there any lack of semi-popular literature; but of books adapted to the guidance of students in the task of actually studying the Old Testament itself, there is a great lack. The following list is therefore of necessity made up, not of outlines of courses of study nor of guides to study of any sort, but rather of works which summarize the results of study in fairly popular and attractive form.

Of course, every student should possess himself of a copy of the American Standard Revised Version, which is published by Thomas Nelson & Sons, New York City, in more than a hundred different styles, at prices ranging from twenty-two cents up.

McFadyen, J. E. *Old Testament Criticism and the Christian Church*. New York: Scribners, 1903. \$1.50.

This is an admirable setting forth of the modern scientific method and point of view in the study of the Old Testament. The spirit and method are irenic and the discussion is full enough to be instructive and helpful. It concerns itself not merely with the changes in the formulation of Old Testament teaching, but takes up also the implications and significance of criticism as they affect the theology and activity of evangelical Christianity.

Vernon, A. W. *The Religious Value of the Old Testament in the Light of Modern Scholarship*. New York: T. Y. Crowell & Co., 1907. Pp. vii+81. \$0.90.

This is a much more concise presentation of the results of the critical method of study as applied to the Old Testament than the foregoing. It is not as winning in its method of approach to the subject, but it offers in brief space and in attractive literary form a summary of the aspects of Old Testament religion, newly emphasized by the historical method of study.

McFadyen, J. E. *An Introduction to the Old Testament*. New York: Armstrong, 1905. Pp. xii+356. \$1.75.

This is the best popular introduction to the literature of the Old Testament. It offers the information concerning the origin and character of the various books of the Old Testament that the average man desires and it is distinctly within the range of the capacity of the non-technical student.

Ottley, R. L. *A Short History of the Hebrews to the Roman Period*. New York: Macmillan, 1901. Pp. 324. \$1.25.

A conservative and judicial summary of the results of modern study as they affect the construction of the Old Testament history. Its spirit is progressive, but the methods and results are sufficiently conservative to make the book a good work to put into the hands of those beginning the study of Israel's history.

Wade, G. Woosung. *Old Testament History*. 2d ed. New York: Dutton & Co., 1903. Pp. 532. \$1.50.

Dr. Wade's volume is somewhat more advanced in its historical and critical principles and methods than that of Ottley, and it is therefore adapted to the demands and needs of a better prepared class of students, being much more extensive and full in its consideration of the various problems afforded by the Old Testament narratives.

Mitchell, H. G. *The World Before Abraham*, according to Gen. i-xi, with an Introduction to the Pentateuch. Boston: Houghton, Mifflin & Co., 1901. Pp. 303. \$1.75.

This is an admirable introduction to the complicated questions of Hexateuchal criticism. It gathers up the important facts and presents them in a way intelligible to any thoughtful student. Along with this it furnishes a commentary upon the first eleven chapters of Genesis which afford good ground for class work in the early ideas and institutions of Israel's life.

Kirkpatrick, A. F. *The Doctrine of the Prophets*. (The Warburtonian Lectures for 1886-1890.) London and New York: Macmillan, 1892. Pp. xix+544. 6s.

This is the best available popular summary of the history and contents of Old Testament prophecy. Its critical standpoint is that of a mediating scholar. It constitutes a very good introduction to the study of prophecy, and will be found of much value in the teacher's own preparation for his work.

Harper, W. R. *The Priestly Element in the Old Testament. An Aid to Historical Study for Use in Advanced Bible Classes*. (Constructive Bible Studies: College Series.) 3rd edition. Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1905. Pp. 300. \$1.00.

President Harper's book is the only one in this list that actually sets the student to work and guides his efforts as he proceeds, but it makes very severe demands upon the student's time and intellect, and can be used only in the most advanced classes. It deals with the legal literature, the Psalms, the Books of Ezra, Nehemiah and Chronicles, and the ritualistic ideas and institutions in Israel.

Davison, W. T. *The Wisdom Literature of the Old Testament*. London: C. H. Kelley, 1893. Pp. 315. 2s 6d.

This is a splendid and simple introduction to one of the richest fields in Old Testament literature. It could be used by a good teacher as the source of much information and inspiration in the study of such books as Job, Proverbs, Ecclesiastes.

Kent, C. F. *The Wise Men of Ancient Israel and Their Proverbs*. Chicago: Silver, Burdett & Co., 1899. Pp. 208. \$1.25.

This is a careful introduction to the book of Proverbs and the history of the proverbial literature together with analyses of the contents of the book and summaries of its most important teaching. In the light of this book the study of Proverbs might be made of real interest and value.

Davison, W. T. *The Praises of Israel. An Introduction to the Study of Psalms*. London: C. H. Kelley, 1892. 2s 6d.

No better popular guide to the study of the Psalter could be desired than this. In the hands of a skillful teacher the book of Psalms would become a new thing to an advanced class.

Marti, K. *The Religion of the Old Testament: Its Place Among the Religions of the Nearer East*. (The Crown Theological Library.) New York: G. P. Putnam's Sons, 1907. Pp. vii+251. \$1.25.

This is a splendid bird's-eye view of the religion of the Old Testament as interpreted by modern scholars. It is altogether too summary for class use, but will be found useful in giving the teacher a connected, comprehensive view of the entire course of Israel's religion which will enable him to study things in their proper relations. Prof. Marti is one of the most radical of historical critics.

Ottley, R. S. *The Religion of Israel. An Historical Sketch*. London: C. J. Clay & Sons, 1905. Pp. 227. 4s.

This is a somewhat more detailed summary than that of Marti and also distinctly more moderate in its conclusions, but not so attractively written nor so thoroughly straightforward and scientific in its method. But on the whole it will be found more acceptable to most teachers than Marti's book.

Hastings, J. *A New Dictionary of the Bible, with maps and illustrations*. New York: Scribners, 1908. \$5.00.

This volume, which is just about to be published, should be in the library of every Sunday school and accessible to every teacher and advanced student. It is the only popular Bible Dictionary that presents the results of the newer methods of Bible Study. Its articles are thoroughly scholarly and in each case carry the name of the author.

*The New Century Bible*. General Editor, Walter F. Adeney. Revised Version with Notes, Index and Maps. New York: Frowde, 1904. \$0.90 per volume. Nine volumes are now published.

To any one desiring a popular yet thoroughly scientific commentary on the Old Testament, this series is to be highly recommended. It is slightly more severe in its demands upon the student than is the Cambridge Bible, but its volumes are uniformly of high grade.