

**THE HIGHER  
CRITICISM OF  
THE PENTATEUCH**

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The Higher Criticism of the Pentateuch by William Henry Green

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THE UNITY OF THE BOOK OF GENESIS

By WILLIAM HENRY GREEN, D.D., LL.D.  
Professor of Oriental and Old Testament Literature in  
Princeton Theological Seminary

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## PREFACE

THE Higher Criticism has been of late so associated with extravagant theorizing, and with insidious attacks upon the genuineness and credibility of the books of the Bible that the very term has become an offence to serious minds. It has come to be considered one of the most dangerous forms of infidelity, and in its very nature hostile to revealed truth. And it must be confessed that in the hands of those who are unfriendly to supernatural religion it has proved a potent weapon in the interest of unbelief. Nor has the use made of it by those who, while claiming to be evangelical critics, accept and defend the revolutionary conclusions of the antisupernaturalists, tended to remove the discredit into which it has fallen.

This is not the fault of the Higher Criticism in its genuine sense, however, but of its perversion. Properly speaking it is an inquiry into the origin and character of the writings to which it is applied. It seeks to ascertain by all available means the authors by whom, the time at which, the circumstances under which, and the design with which they were produced. Such investigations, rightly conducted, must prove a most important aid to the understanding and just appreciation of the writings in question.

The books of the Bible have nothing to fear from such investigations, however searching and thorough, and however fearlessly pursued. They can only result in establishing more firmly the truth of the claims, which the

Bible makes for itself, in every particular. The Bible stands upon a rock from which it can never be dislodged.

The genuineness and historical truth of the Books of Moses have been strenuously impugned in the name of the Higher Criticism. It has been claimed as one of its most certain results, scientifically established, that they have been falsely ascribed to Moses, and were in reality produced at a much later period. It is affirmed that the history is by no means reliable and merely records the uncertain and variant traditions of a post-Mosaic age; and that the laws are not those of Moses, but the growth of centuries after his time. All this is demonstrably based on false and sophistical reasoning, which rests on unfounded assumptions and employs weak and inconclusive arguments.

It is the purpose of this volume to show, as briefly and compactly as possible, that the faith of all past ages in respect to the Pentateuch has not been mistaken. It is what it claims to be, and what it has always been believed to be. In the first chapter it is exhibited in its relation to the Old Testament as a whole, of which it is not only the initial portion, but the basis or foundation upon which the entire superstructure reposes; or rather, it contains the germs from which all that follows was developed. In the second, the plan and contents of the Pentateuch are unfolded. It has one theme, which is consistently adhered to, and which is treated with orderly arrangement and upon a carefully considered plan suggestive of a single author. In the third it is shown by a variety of arguments, both external and internal, that this author was Moses. The various forms of opposition to this conclusion are then outlined and separately considered. First, the weakness of the earlier objections from anachronisms and inconsistencies is shown. In the fourth chapter the divisive hypotheses, which have in

succession been maintained in opposition to the unity of the Pentateuch, are reviewed and shown to be baseless, and the arguments urged in their support are refuted. In the fifth chapter the genuineness of the laws is defended against the development hypothesis. And in the sixth and last chapter these hypotheses are shown to be radically unbiblical. They are hostile alike to the truth of the Pentateuch and to the supernatural revelation which it contains.

PRINCETON, N. J., August 1, 1895.