

**PROPHECY, JEWISH AND
CHRISTIAN: CONSIDERED IN
A SERIES OF WARBURTON
LECTURES AT LINCOLN'S INN**

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Prophecy, Jewish and Christian: Considered in a Series of Warburton Lectures at Lincoln's Inn
by Henry Wace

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HENRY WACE

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PROPHECY
JEWISH AND CHRISTIAN

CONSIDERED IN A SERIES OF
WARBURTON LECTURES AT
LINCOLN'S INN

BY HENRY WACE, D.D.

DEAN OF CANTERBURY
SOMETIMES PREACHER OF LINCOLN'S INN

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WARBURTON LECTURES ON PROPHECY

INTRODUCTION

THESE lectures were preached in the Chapel of Lincoln's Inn, on the foundation of Bishop Warburton, in the course of the years 1894 to 1898. Their publication has been delayed, partly by the constant pressure of public duties, and partly because I wished to consider whether the development of the criticism of the Old Testament would materially affect the traditional point of view from which, in the main, Scripture prophecy is here treated. The result has been to give me reason for satisfaction that I have improved upon the Horatian rule of reserving serious writings for at least nine years. The course of archæological discovery since these lectures were preached has, without exception, tended to confirm the historical

truth of the Old Testament Scriptures, from the Book of Genesis onwards; and the remarkable lectures delivered last year by Professor Kittel of Leipzig to the National School Teachers of Saxony¹ exhibit a remarkable reversion towards old views from the theories which were popularised twenty years ago. Those theories, of course, still find their adherents in various degrees, but each year seems to cut the ground from under them. Every year seems to afford new encouragement to those who have all along ventured to retain the conviction, that it would ultimately prove that there is good foundation for the universal and continuous belief of the Jewish and Christian Churches, for about two thousand years, respecting their sacred Scriptures.

I am happily able to appeal to an unimpeachable authority in starting from that belief. Dr Sanday, the eminent Margaret Professor at Oxford, has told us in his *Bampton Lectures*, pp. 392-393, that the view of the Holy Scriptures which was prevalent

¹ A translation has just been published by Messrs Williams & Norgate, under the title of *The Scientific Study of the Old Testament, Its Principal Results and their Bearing upon Religious Instruction*: 1910.

in this country about fifty years ago was substantially the same as that which is exhibited in early Christian writers about the year 200 A.D., and moreover that, in respect to the Old Testament, it was the same as that which prevailed in the time of Christ; so much so that one of the chief supports on which it rested was the extent to which it is represented in the teaching of our Lord and of the Apostles. Now, quite apart from the Divine authority which is thus given to the traditional belief respecting the Scriptures, I would submit that as a mere matter of evidence that is a fact of momentous importance. At the time of our Lord, and consequently before it, the Jews regarded the books of the Old Testament, as we now have them, as containing the inspired record of their history, and entertained the same general view of that history which has prevailed in their own Church and the Christian Church until quite modern times. Now, a part of that view was that the ceremonial as well as the moral law of the Pentateuch, the portion of the Pentateuch now called "P," and the Book of Deuteronomy, proceeded at least in the main from Moses himself. But the critical theory

which has been generally accepted of late is that Deuteronomy must be ascribed to about the year 600 B.C., and that P, or at least a great part of the ceremonial law, was drawn up during the exile about 500 B.C., so that we are required to suppose that the Jews of the generation into which our Lord was born had somehow been persuaded that laws and writings which were only some 400 years old were really 1000 years older. I ask whether that is conceivable? Is it conceivable that an acute, tenacious—to use the description of them in Deuteronomy—a “stiff-necked” race had allowed a whole code of laws, and the solemn enforcement of those laws on alleged Divine authority, to have been imposed on them as having been given by God to Moses, when they were really no older than times which had been in the memory of their great-great-grandfathers?

That single consideration seems to me to render the prevalent critical theory quite inconceivable, but I must needs carry the same consideration further. The theory is beyond dispute absolutely contradictory to the view of the Old Testament history which is represented by the Old Testament itself. It is the view that, broadly speaking,