

**THE EPISTLE OF ST. JAMES: THE  
GREEK TEXT WITH  
INTRODUCTION, COMMENTARY  
AS FAR AS CHAPTER IV, VERSE 7,  
AND ADDITIONAL NOTES**

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The Epistle of St. James: the Greek text with introduction, commentary as far as chapter IV, verse 7, and additional notes by F. J. A. Hort

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Lat.  
ment. (N. 17)  
James.

# THE EPISTLE OF ST JAMES

*THE GREEK TEXT*

WITH INTRODUCTION, COMMENTARY AS FAR AS  
CHAPTER IV, VERSE 7, AND ADDITIONAL NOTES

BY THE LATE

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## PREFACE

THE circumstances connected with the origin of this book have already been related by Dr Westcott in the preface to the companion edition of Dr Hort's Commentary on 1 St Peter i.—ii. 17, published in 1898. It was designed to take its place in a Commentary on the whole N.T. planned by the three friends, Westcott, Lightfoot, and Hort in 1860.

Dr Hort's share included the Synoptic Gospels, the Acts, and the Epistles of St James, St Peter, and St Jude. After a brief period of work on the Gospels, of which only a few unimportant fragments remain, Dr Hort set to work on St James. If we may judge from the condition of the MS, the Commentary on Chapter 1 was complete when he came back to Cambridge, as a Fellow of Emmanuel College, in 1871. His notes were, however, worked over and written out afresh when he chose St James as the subject for his first three courses of Lectures as Hulsean Professor in 1880, 1881. It is idle now to regret that his attention was called away to lecture in 1882 on Tatian's Apology, leaving the Commentary incomplete, but within sight of the end. When at length he returned to the Epistle in the Summer Term of 1889, he dealt mainly with questions of Introduction. The introductory matter printed in this volume was prepared for that course of Lectures. It was

supplemented by condensed notes on select passages from the earlier chapters of the Epistle. No further progress was made with the Commentary on the Text.

The Introduction and Commentary have been printed substantially as they stand in the MS., except that for the sake of uniformity English renderings have in some cases been supplied at the head of the notes. This however has only been done in cases where the note itself gave clear indication of the rendering which Dr Hort would himself have proposed.

No one who reads this book with the attention that it requires and deserves will feel that any apology is needed for its publication, in spite of its incompleteness. In the Introduction no doubt the scholarship appears to a certain extent in what Dr Sanday, in the Preface to Dr Hort's notes on Apoc. i.—iii. published last year, aptly describes as 'undress.' And some points would naturally have received fuller treatment, if the author himself had been spared to prepare his own work for publication. But there is no reason to suppose that his conclusions would have been seriously modified by anything that has been written on the Epistle since his death. His Introduction has, it will not be superfluous to point out, an advantage from the appended Commentary, inevitably but none the less unfortunately lacking in the still more compendious introduction provided, e.g. in such a recognized Text-book as Jülicher's. For after all the ultimate appeal on most of the vexed questions of Introduction lies to the Text itself. And on one point at least Dr Hort's patient and minute examination of the Text supplies a conclusive answer to the charge of incoherence<sup>1</sup> not uncommonly brought against the Epistle on the ground of the obvious abruptness of

<sup>1</sup> On this point it is well worth while to compare *A Discussion of the General Epistle of St James* by B. St John Farry, published by the Cambridge University Press in 1903.



its style. No one can study these notes consecutively without becoming conscious of a subtle harmony underlying the whole Epistle, due partly to the consistent application of a few fundamental principles characteristic of the author<sup>1</sup>, and partly to the recurrence in different forms of the same fundamental failing in the people to whom his warnings are addressed<sup>2</sup>.

In regard to the evidence to be derived from the language in which the Epistle is written it is clear that Dr Hort worked habitually on an hypothesis, the possibility of which many modern critics either ignore or deny. Everything here turns on the extent to which a knowledge of Greek may be presupposed among the Jewish inhabitants of Palestine in the First Century A.D. Jülicher, for example, regards the excellence of the Greek of the Epistle as in itself conclusive against the traditional attribution. This seems arbitrary in the case of a man whose father according to an early tradition (St Matth. ii.) spent some time in Egypt. Dr Hort on the other hand regarded a knowledge of Greek as anything but exceptional in Palestine. He thinks it possible to identify dialectic peculiarities of Palestinian Greek<sup>3</sup>. He is prepared to believe in the currency<sup>4</sup> of 'Greek paraphrases of the O.T. resembling the Hebrew Targums.' The influence that he everywhere ascribes to the LXX in moulding N.T. vocabulary presupposes a considerable familiarity with the Greek Version of the O.T. in Apostolic circles<sup>5</sup>. And he finds the Epistle of St James full of implied references to the words of the Lord *in their Greek form*<sup>6</sup>. This point is one of far-reaching importance, and if there are good reasons for supposing that a man in St James' position could

<sup>1</sup> See notes on i. 18, 21, iii. 9 for St James' doctrine of Creation: on the true Law i. 25, ii. 12: on his conception of the World i. 27, iii. 6, iv. 4.

<sup>2</sup> E.g. formalism i. 23, 26, 27, ii. 19: censoriousness i. 19, iii. 1, 9, 12.

<sup>3</sup> See p. 46 b, 84 a.

<sup>4</sup> See p. 94 b.

<sup>5</sup> See esp. p. 97 b.

<sup>6</sup> See p. 91 a, p. xxxiii. etc.

not have had a thorough knowledge of Greek, it would be well that they should be produced.

The Commentary itself, as far as it goes, is finished work in every line. Each word and phrase and sentence has been examined in the light of the whole available evidence with characteristic freshness, and with a singularly delicate sense both of the meaning of words, and of subtle variations of grammatical structure. At times, no doubt, in Dr Hort's work as in Dr Westcott's, the investigation of a particular word or form of thought seems to be carried beyond the limits strictly necessary for the interpretation of the passage immediately under discussion. It is however only fair to recal the fact that each separate Commentary was meant to form part of an inclusive scheme. Both scholars combined a keen sense of the variety of the several parts of the N.T. with a deep conviction of the fundamental unity of the whole. Their field of view was never limited by the particular passage on which they might happen to be commenting. No single fragment, they felt, could be fully understood out of relation to the whole Revelation of which it formed a part. Conciseness and, as regards the rapid apprehension of the salient points in individual books, something of sharpness of focus were sacrificed in consequence. But for students of the N.T. as a whole, the result is pure gain. The labour entailed in following out the suggested lines of thought is amply repaid by a growing sense of depth beyond depth of Wisdom hidden under familiar and seemingly commonplace forms of expression. And even the several books stand out in the end in more clearly defined individuality.

This characteristic of Dr Hort's method minimizes the disadvantages arising from the fragmentariness of the finished work. The discussion of representative sections of different writers has given him wider scope for the treatment of the various departments of N.T. Theology than would have been

afforded by a Commentary formally complete on a single Epistle. The First Epistle of St Peter occupies no doubt a peculiarly central position in N.T. The relation in which it stands to the Epistles to the Romans and to the 'Ephesians' led Dr Hort to treat many of the characteristic problems of the Pauline Gospel, and its relation to the Epistle of St James is remarkably illustrated by the fact that in commenting on St Peter Dr Hort not infrequently summarizes the results of investigations recorded in full in this volume. Yet even 1 St Peter would not have given him the scope afforded by these chapters of St James for treating of the fundamental problems of individual (as distinct from social) Ethics, and of Psychology.

In spite therefore of its apparent fragmentariness Dr Hort's work is marked by a real unity, and possesses a permanent value for all serious students of N.T. In details no doubt both of vocabulary and syntax his results will need to be carefully checked in the fresh light which is coming from the Papyri. But in work so broadly based, fresh evidence we may well believe will confirm far more than it will upset.

But, some one may say, granted all this, what is meant by the permanent value of a Commentary? Are not Commentaries like all scientific text-books, only written to be superseded? In every other department of study, however gifted a scholar may be, he must be content that his particular contribution to the advancement of knowledge shall be merged and lost in the general sum. Is there any reason to think that the case is different in Theology? Strangely enough there is.

The subject-matter of the science of Theology is provided by the Bible. 'That standard interpretation' of the primary Gospel 'was ordained to be for the guidance of the Church in all after ages, in combination with the living guidance of the

<sup>1</sup> p. ix.