

**STUDIES IN THE
BOOK OF DANIEL,
SECOND SERIES**

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Studies in the Book of Daniel, Second Series by Robert Dick Wilson

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BY
ROBERT DICK WILSON
PH.D., D.D., LL.D.



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INTRODUCTION

THOSE who are acquainted with the first volume of Dr. Wilson's *Studies in the Book of Daniel* will need no extended introduction to the present volume. "The method pursued," he tells us, "is to give first of all a discussion of some of the principles involved in the objections considered in the pages following; then to state the objections with the assumptions on which they are based; next, to give the reasons why these assumptions are adjudged to be false; and lastly, to sum up in a few words the conclusions to be derived from the discussion." Dr. Wilson was accustomed to say that he would not attempt to answer general or sweeping charges against the Bible. But where specific charges were made, reflecting upon the truthfulness of the Bible, and where evidence was presented in support of such charges, he was prepared to undertake the most painstaking investigations to test the correctness of the charges. He believed thoroughly in "scientific Biblical criticism." His method and aim were truly scientific. He was not only willing, but eager to ascertain the facts and all the facts. For he believed and showed again and again that the facts support the high claims of the Bible to entire trustworthiness as the Word of God. Consequently in his great debate with the critics he tried to single out the strongest and most serious charges as expressed by their most influential spokesmen, to state these objections in their own words, and then to deal with them as thoroughly as possible in the light of the evidence.

Dr. Wilson's original plan was to write three books on Daniel. The first which dealt with historical questions appeared in 1917. The second was to deal with the linguistic problem, the objections raised by the critics on the ground of "philological assumptions based on the nature of the Hebrew and Aramaic in which it was written." The nucleus of this volume might well have been the article on "The Aramaic of Daniel," which he had contributed to *Biblical and Theological Studies*, the Centennial Volume published by the Faculty of Princeton Theological Seminary in 1912. In this

article he had maintained against the higher critics and especially Dr. Driver that the Aramaic of the Book of Daniel is of the character which we would expect to have been spoken in Babylon in the Neo-Babylonian and early Persian period. About a year before Dr. Wilson's death in 1930, Mr. Harold H. Rowley published a book on *The Aramaic of the Old Testament* (Oxford, 1929) in which he took issue with Dr. Wilson's conclusions regarding Daniel and defended the critical views of Dr. Driver. Dr. Wilson spent much time during the last summer of his life in studying this book. From casual statements made to members of his family and to his colleagues at Westminster Seminary it was inferred that Dr. Wilson had practically completed his investigation, that he felt that he could satisfactorily answer Mr. Rowley, and that his reply was practically ready for publication. Consequently in the memorial articles which appeared in the *Sunday School Times* and in *Christianity Today*, shortly after his death, it was stated that Dr. Wilson's reply to Mr. Rowley would soon be published. Unfortunately, search for the manuscript of the reply was unsuccessful, nor were any data sufficient to form the basis for such an article discovered. Either Dr. Wilson's statements as to the shape in which his material stood were misunderstood, or the manuscript material was lost or accidentally destroyed. Whichever be the explanation, it is most regrettable that Dr. Wilson's own defense of his position could not be published. Especially is this to be regretted since Dr. Wilson's other studies in the philology of the Book of Daniel, which appeared in the *Princeton Theological Review*, in addition to being highly technical are hardly extensive enough to form anything but the nucleus of a volume on philology. And as they are there available to specialists, it has not seemed advisable to include them in a volume which deals with other subjects.

The contents of the present volume, consequently, represent the studies which Dr. Wilson intended for the third volume of the series: "In a third volume I shall discuss Daniel's relation to the canon of the Old Testament as determining the date of the book and in connection with this the silence of Ecclesiasticus with reference to Daniel, the alleged absence of an observable influence of Daniel upon post-captivity literature, and the whole matter of apocalyptic

literature, especially in its relation to predictive prophecy." Two of the studies referred to had recently appeared in the *Princeton Theological Review*, and Dr. Wilson allowed the others also to appear first in its pages without, however, relinquishing the plan with regard to them, which he had stated in the first volume on Daniel. In view of the fact that this plan was never carried out and since with the lapse of years magazine articles tend to become inaccessible, it has been deemed advisable to gather them all together, and present them in the form which was originally intended by their author. This has been made possible through the generosity of a personal friend of Dr. Wilson's who is unwilling to have his identity disclosed.

In view of my close and intimate association with Dr. Wilson, a friendship begun in my student days and extending over a period of more than a quarter of a century, it was thought appropriate that I should prepare these articles for the press. I have counted it a privilege to help in this way to make the writings of a great defender of the faith more widely known. I have had the advantage of access to copies of these articles which contained Dr. Wilson's notes, comments and corrections. It has not been possible to use all of this material, and certain further changes have also seemed advisable. It has been my aim however to make only such changes as I felt sure that he himself would have approved. Thanks are due to Rev. Leslie W. Sloat, one of the last students privileged to study under Dr. Wilson, for help in preparing the copy for the press, and for assistance in proof reading. Mr. Sloat has also prepared the index.

OSWALD T. ALLIS.