

**ECCLESIASTES: OR, THE
PREACHER; THE
CAMBRIDGE BIBLE FOR
SCHOOLS AND COLLEGES**

Published @ 2017 Trieste Publishing Pty Ltd

ISBN 9780649567645

Ecclesiastes: Or, The Preacher; The Cambridge Bible for Schools and Colleges by E. H. Plumptre & J. J. S. Perowne

Except for use in any review, the reproduction or utilisation of this work in whole or in part in any form by any electronic, mechanical or other means, now known or hereafter invented, including xerography, photocopying and recording, or in any information storage or retrieval system, is forbidden without the permission of the publisher, Trieste Publishing Pty Ltd, PO Box 1576 Collingwood, Victoria 3066 Australia.

All rights reserved.

Edited by Trieste Publishing Pty Ltd.
Cover @ 2017

This book is sold subject to the condition that it shall not, by way of trade or otherwise, be lent, re-sold, hired out, or otherwise circulated without the publisher's prior consent in any form or binding or cover other than that in which it is published and without a similar condition including this condition being imposed on the subsequent purchaser.

www.triestepublishing.com

E. H. PLUMPTRE & J. J. S. PEROWNE

**ECCLESIASTES: OR, THE
PREACHER; THE
CAMBRIDGE BIBLE FOR
SCHOOLS AND COLLEGES**

The Cambridge Bible for Schools
and Colleges.

ECCLESIASTES;

OR,

THE PREACHER.

London: C. J. CLAY AND SONS,
CAMBRIDGE UNIVERSITY PRESS WAREHOUSE,
AVE MARIA LANE.



Cambridge: DEIGHTON, BELL, AND CO.
Leipzig: F. A. BROCKHAUS.

**The Cambridge Bible for Schools
and Colleges.**

GENERAL EDITOR:—J. J. S. PEROWNE, D.D.,
DEAN OF PETERBOROUGH.

ECCLESIASTES;

OR,

THE PREACHER,

WITH NOTES AND INTRODUCTION

BY

E. H. PLUMPTRE, D.D.

DEAN OF WELLS.

EDITED FOR THE SYNDICS OF THE UNIVERSITY PRESS.

Cambridge:
AT THE UNIVERSITY PRESS.

1888

[*All Rights reserved.*]

Cambridge

PRINTED BY C. J. CLAY M.A. AND SONS
AT THE UNIVERSITY PRESS

gt-wesley lib
6-20-39

© 6-23-39 J.A

PREFACE
BY THE GENERAL EDITOR.

THE General Editor of *The Cambridge Bible for Schools* thinks it right to say that he does not hold himself responsible either for the interpretation of particular passages which the Editors of the several Books have adopted, or for any opinion on points of doctrine that they may have expressed. In the New Testament more especially questions arise of the deepest theological import, on which the ablest and most conscientious interpreters have differed and always will differ. His aim has been in all such cases to leave each Contributor to the unfettered exercise of his own judgment, only taking care that mere controversy should as far as possible be avoided. He has contented himself chiefly with a careful revision of the notes, with pointing out omissions, with

suggesting occasionally a reconsideration of some question, or a fuller treatment of difficult passages, and the like.

Beyond this he has not attempted to interfere, feeling it better that each Commentary should have its own individual character, and being convinced that freshness and variety of treatment are more than a compensation for any lack of uniformity in the Series.

DEANERY, PETERBOROUGH.

PREFACE.

Among the many enigmas of the Old Testament the book of Ecclesiastes is pre-eminently enigmatic. It comes before us as the sphinx of Hebrew literature, with its unsolved riddles of history and life. It has become almost a proverb that every interpreter of this book thinks that all previous interpreters have been wrong. Its very title has received some dozen discordant interpretations. The dates assigned to its authorship by competent experts range over very nearly a thousand years, from B.C. 990 to B.C. 10. Not less has been the divergence of opinion as to its structure and its aims. It has been regarded as a formal treatise, or as a collection of unconnected thoughts and maxims, like the *Meditations* of Marcus Aurelius, or Pascal's *Pensées*, or Hare's *Guesses at Truth*; or as a dialogue, though without the names of the interlocutors, after the manner of Plato; or like the discussions between the *Dotto* and the *Ignorante*, that form a prominent feature in the teaching of the Italian Jesuits, and in which the writer holds free debate with his opponents¹. Those who take the latter view are, unfortunately, divided among themselves as to which interlocutor in the dialogue represents the views of the writer, and

¹ See Ginsburg's exhaustive survey of the literature of Ecclesiastes in the *Introduction* to his Commentary. Herder may be named as the author of the Dialogue theory, but he has been followed by many others.