

**THE LIFE, CHARACTER & ACTS OF
JOHN THE BAPTIST & THE
RELATION OF HIS MINISTRY TO
THE CHRISTIAN DISPENSATION,
PP. 1-261**

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WILLIAM C. DUNCAN

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THE
LIFE, CHARACTER, AND ACTS
OF
JOHN THE BAPTIST;
AND THE RELATION OF HIS
MINISTRY TO THE CHRISTIAN DISPENSATION.

BASED UPON THE JOHANNES DER TÄUFER OF L. VON RÖHREN

BY

WILLIAM C. DUNCAN, D. D.,

AUTHOR OF THE "HISTORY OF THE EARLY BAPTISTS," "FULFILL GIFT BOOK,"
"YEARS OF JESUS OF NAZARETH," ETC.

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P R E F A C E .

THE basis of the present treatise is a German monography written by L. Von Rohden, of Lübeck, and published by him in 1838, under the title "Johannes der Täufer in seinem Leben und Wirken, dargestellt nach den Zeugnissen der heiligen Schrift." The book is commended by Neander, in his *Life of Christ*, as "the production of a promising young theologian of Lübeck, and a work well fitted for general circulation."

The whole of the treatise of Von Rohden has been translated and is presented in this volume. Carefully elaborated additional matter, however, amounting to from one-third to one-half as much as the original work, has been incorporated into the body of the monography; and much has been given in the form of critical and explanatory notes, of which only a few, and those of little value, are found in Von Rohden. In this way the treatise has not only been adapted more completely to the wants of the general reader, but has also been converted into a convenient manual of reference for the use of such as are interested in biblical studies, on all points relating to the history and labors of John the Baptist.

In preparing the material which has been added, the

author has had constant reference to those critical authorities which treat most fundamentally of the various topics which have come under consideration. Among the writers to whom he is most indebted, whom indeed he has carefully consulted on every point of importance, he would mention J. G. E. Leopold, monography on John the Baptist, entitled "Johannes der Täufer, eine biblische Untersuchung" (published in 1825); Dr. A. Neander, *Leben Jesu* (Life of Jesus); Dr. G. B. Winer, *Biblisches Realwörterbuch*; Prof. J. L. Jacobi, in *Kitto's Cyclop. of Bib. Literature*; Drs. A. Tholuck and F. Lücke, *Commentaries on the Gospel of John*; and, in their *New Testament Commentaries*, Dr. S. T. Bloomfield, Henry Alford, M. A., and Drs. H. Olshausen, W. M. L. De Wette and H. A. W. Meyer.

This is the first book devoted exclusively to the treatment of the life and ministry of John the Baptist which has ever appeared in the English language. The subjects which it considers the author has attempted to discuss with thoroughness and with impartiality. If his treatise shall be found to fill a place hitherto untenanted in English religious literature, he will be abundantly rewarded for his labors.

W. C. D.

New Orleans, Sept. 15., 1852.

PREFACE TO THE FIFTH EDITION.

THE difficulty of treating, in a satisfactory manner, subjects which admit of so much discussion, and so much fair difference of opinion, as the Life, Character, and Acts of John the Baptist, can be known only to those who have attempted a similar kind of composition. No two candid writers, even of a like theological training, could, by any possibility, harmonize in all points in composing a complete Life of the Forerunner; if they should attempt, as is done in this volume, to determine the nature of his mission, and to describe his character, upon the basis of an exegetical examination of all the passages which are found relating to him in the New Testament. A general and not a minute correspondence of views, is all that can, in such a case, be properly expected. Those, then, of any system of religious belief, who hope to find all their own ideas of the Forerunner reproduced and reflected in this Treatise, will find their expectations disappointed. The book is the result of an independent, and, it is believed, thorough, examination of the topics discussed in its pages; and it was written with no other object or hope, than the discovery and disclosure of the truth as far as it relates to the Ministry of John the Baptist.

The Author is gratified by the distinguished marks of favor with which his work has been very generally received. Its popularity is sufficiently evinced by the fact that, within less than a year from its first publication, it has passed through four editions. The fifth edition now makes its appearance. In this, a number of typographical errors which found their way into the first and subsequent editions, has been corrected; and alterations have been made in portions of the book, where the original text was liable to be misconceived.

New pages of interesting and pertinent matter have been added, in several parts of the Treatise, particularly in the concluding chapter; and such changes and improvements have been made, as could be effected in a stereotyped work.

Since the publication of the first edition, there has appeared, in Germany, a work by Prof. Gams, of Hildesheim, on "John the Baptist in Prison," which discusses its subject in a space of 296 pages; and also a treatise of 41 pages, by B. Gademann of Münchberg, on the "Relation of John the Baptist to the Lord, according to the Evangelical Accounts"; published in the last number of Rudlebach and Guericke's "Zeitschrift" for 1852.—From England, besides Huxtable on the "Ministry of S. John the Baptist," a thorough treatise, but reaching only to 67 pages (published in 1848),—the Author has received Dr. Wm. Bell's "Enquiry into the Divine Missions of John the Baptist and Jesus Christ,"—a work of 345 pages, published in the last century, which is wholly occupied with proving from the connection of John and Jesus with each other, that the mission of each must have been divine. It is not, therefore, properly speaking, a treatise on "the life and ministry" of the Baptist. He has obtained, moreover, Dr. George Horne's "Considerations on the Life and Death of John the Baptist"; a work published first about 1769, the aim of which is "to deduce moral and religious reflections from the circumstances and conduct of the Baptist." A "Portrait of John the Baptist," by Henry Belfrage, D.D.,—published in 1830 in Edinburgh, but unknown in 1852 to the Author of the present Treatise,—has also been received. The picture of the Forerunner presented in this neat duodecimo of 237 pages is a fine conception finely executed. A series of Articles on the Baptist, by Judge Joel Jones (of America), will be found in Vol. IV. of the "Jewish Chronicle."

October 1st, 1859.

TABLE OF CONTENTS.

PART FIRST: PRELIMINARY SKETCH.		Page
CHAPTER I:	Condition of the Jewish People in a theo- cratic point of view at the time of the Birth of John,	9
CHAPTER II:	Prophecies and Expectations regarding the Baptist,	22
 PART SECOND: JOHN BEFORE HIS PUBLIC APPEARANCE.		
CHAPTER I:	Birth of the Baptist,	35
CHAPTER II:	John's Family Relations,	52
CHAPTER III:	Development of John and Preparation for his Public Ministry,	76
 PART THIRD: MINISTRY OF JOHN BEFORE THE PUBLIC AP- PEARANCE OF CHRIST.		
CHAPTER I:	John's Preaching of Repentance,	94
CHAPTER II:	John's Baptism,	117
CHAPTER III:	Effects of the Ministry of John among the People,	138
CHAPTER IV:	The Baptism of Jesus,	150
 PART FOURTH: JOHN AFTER THE PUBLIC APPEARANCE OF THE MESSIAH.		
CHAPTER I:	John's Testimony respecting Christ,	172
CHAPTER II:	The Disciples of the Baptist,	191