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The Book of Enoch

August Dillmann

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From the General Introduction.
§ I. Short Account of the Book.
In Gen. v. 34 it is said of Enoch that he walked with God. This expression was taken in later times to mean not only that he led a godly life, but also that he was the recipient of superhuman knowledge. It was not unnatural, therefore, that an Apocalyptic literature began to circulate under his name in the centuries when such literature was rife. In the present book, translated from the Ethiopic, we have large fragments of such a literature, proceeding from a variety of authors. Additional portions of this literature may be discovered in the coming years. Only recently two Slavonic MSS., which belong to this literature, but are quite independent of the present book, have been printed in Russia.
The present book from the Ethiopic belongs to the second and first centuries B.C. All the writers of the New Testament were familiar with it, and were more or less influenced by it in thought and diction1. It is quoted as a genuine production of Enoch by S. Jude, and as Scripture by S. Barnabas. The authors of the Book of Jubilees, the Apocalypse of Baruch and IV Ezra, laid it under contribution. With the earlier Fathers and Apologists it had all the weight of a canonical book, but towards the close of the third and the beginning of the fourth centuries, it began to be discredited, and finally fell under the ban of the Church. Almost the latest reference to it in the Early Church is made by George Syncellus in his Chronography about 800 A. D., who has preserved for us some long passages in Greek. The book was then lost sight of till 1773, when an Ethiopic version of it was found in Abyssinia by Bruce. This traveller brought home three copies of it, two old MSS. and a transcript from one of them. From one of these Laurence made the first modern translation of Enoch in 1821....

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