

NEW TESTAMENT

INTRODUCTION

A Reformed Guide to the Origin, Canon,
and Books of the New Testament

Annotated

Louis Berkhof



Ligature

Hardcover ISBN: 9798194323050

Paperback ISBN: 9798194323289

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First Ligature annotated edition, 2026.

ligaturepress.com

Printed in the United States of America.

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PUBLISHER'S PREFACE

Louis Berkhof (1873–1957) was a pastor, professor, seminary president, and a leading Reformed educator. His early teaching books already display the ordered method that later made his theological works standard classroom texts.

First published in 1915, *New Testament Introduction* examines the authorship, destination, composition, purpose, and canonical place of the New Testament books. Berkhof joins historical inquiry to a unified reading of the canon. The book records his classroom method and the state of introductory scholarship at the start of his career.

Some historical and linguistic judgments in this 1915 work reflect the scholarship available to Berkhof. Readers should distinguish his lasting theological method from conclusions that later manuscript discoveries or research may qualify. *Ligature* preserves his argument and records verified textual corrections without silently modernizing his work.

This edition adds seven division study guides. The guides summarize Berkhof's method, define important terms, direct readers to Scripture, and provide questions for review. *Ligature* also adds a chronology, Scripture index, general index, consolidated references, and short biography. These additions are aids to study. They do not replace Berkhof's text.

These additions help readers compare the books, follow Berkhof's method, and locate his sources. They remain separate from his original text.

—The Editors
Ligature Press

TEXT AND EDITORIAL METHOD

Eerdmans-Sevensma Company published New Testament Introduction (or Special Canonics) in Grand Rapids, Michigan, in 1915. The Princeton Theological Seminary copy of that edition controls this publication.

Ligature's protected manuscript preserves Berkhof's preface, thirty-one main sections, tables, Greek terms, sole footnote, and closing paragraph. Page numbers, running heads, library marks, and other production matter do not belong to the publication text.

The English prose, section order, Greek terms, bibliography, tables, and sole footnote were checked against the 1915 edition. Ligature corrected verified transcription faults and recorded them in the proof log.

Ligature preserves Berkhof's wording, paragraph sequence, historical judgments, and theological conclusions. Corrections are limited to verified transcription faults and clear printer errors recorded in the proof log. The publication copy changes heading levels only to support the live contents and print hierarchy.

Berkhof placed one extended survey of literature in the Prolegomena. This edition moves that survey intact to References and Further Reading. The move prevents a long bibliography from interrupting the main argument. The titles, comments, and judgments remain Berkhof's.

The 1915 edition does not supply a Scripture index or general index suited to this pagination. Ligature builds both indexes from the live interior. Page locators must be rebuilt after every pagination change.

PREFACE

This little work on New Testament Introduction is the result of labor done in and for the class-room, and is primarily intended for my own students. It is not and does not pretend to be a work of original research, but depends in a large measure on the labors of such men as Davidson, Reuss, Weiss, Westcott, Lightfoot, Godet, Holtzmann, Julicher, Zahn, e. a. The indebtedness to these will be evident from its pages.

In method of treatment I have partly gone my own way, both in virtue of principles that are not generally recognized in works of Introduction and for practical considerations. As far as the limits of the work allowed, the directions given by Dr. Kuyper in his *Encyclopaedia of Sacred Theology* have been followed; not only the human but also the divine side of the Sacred Scriptures has been treated.

It has been my constant endeavor in writing this book, to make it a work that would introduce the students to the books of the New Testament, as they have in fact been transmitted to the Church, and not as some critic or other would have them be. Hence critical questions, though not disregarded, do not loom as large on its pages as they often do in works on Introduction; the positive constructive element has a decided precedence over the apologetic; and the human factor that operated in the origin and composition of the Scriptures, is not studied to the neglect of the divine.

A limited number of copies was printed, partly in deference to the expressed wish of some of my present and past students, and partly because I desire to use it as a text-book in the future, there being none of the smaller works on Introduction, such as those of Dods, Pullan, Kerr, Barth, Peake e. a., however excellent some of them may be in their own way, that gave me what I desired. If the book may in some small measure be instrumental in leading others to a greater appreciation and an ever better understanding of the New Testament writings, I shall be very grateful indeed.

L. Berkhof.
Grand Rapids, Mich.
November 30, 1915.

