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Lectures on the Origin and History of the Bible

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## **Lecture III: The Origin of the Books of the Old Testament, Part 1**

Earl Clement Davis

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### Lecture III.

#### The Origin of the Books of the Old Testament.

##### " Higher Criticism."

Just as in the lecture last Sunday we used the New Testament to illustrate the nature, necessity for, and some of the results of that science of Textual Criticism, so to night we are using the Old Testament or Portions of it to illustrate the nature of , the necessity for, and some of the results of Higher Criticism. This also is a phrase which is very much misunderstood. By many it is last and greatest evil in the world. As a matter of fact it is simply a branch of literary study. As increasing numbers of literary mornuments of antiquity were placed before us, and our interest in them , as records and survivals of the Past , compelled us to study them, we developed naturally this science which is sometimes called historical criticism, and sometimes higher criticism, to distinguish from textual or lower criticism.

Higher criticism had already been applied to such ancient literary monuments as the classics of Greece, and Egypt, Babylonia etc. From the confused and confusing mass of remains, a fairly sound and sensible and possible history was constructed. But when these same principles and methods were applied to the Jewish people and the Jewish Literature of the Old Testament, there arose a great protest. Many a man suffered from the protest, and many a deed that might well be forgotten was committed in the name of tradition , and religion. These incidents may well be eliminated from the consideration.

Outline of Lecture.

Purpose, to show the great change that has taken place in the attitude of men towards the Bible during the past century.

Section one. Attitude towards the Bible

~~A~~ A

Section two. Allegorical Interpretation.

~~A~~ B

Section three.

Early Exponents of new views.

~~B~~ C.

Section four. School of Modern Criticism.

~~C~~

Section five. Problems to be met.

General Result. Bible not a book, but a  
Literature.



~~Scientific~~

Leaders in Criticism.

Aben Ezra.			1365 .
Reformers			16th Cen.
<del>Spinoza</del> Hobbes	"Leviathan"	1651	<del>1670</del> .x
Spinoza			1670
Father Simon	France (Cath)		1678.
Issac Newton			1705.
	(Prot)		
Lowth	"De Sacra Poesi"		1753.
Jean Astruc	"Conjectures"		1753.
Herder,			1782.
	Modern.		
Eichhorn.	Introduction to O.T.		1780-83.
DeWette	" 2 "		1806- 1807.
Parker. T.	American.		1843
Well Hausen	Prolegomena.		1894.
Colenso	Pentateuch.		1862
Driver.	Introduction.		1891

*spring*  
~~The reason why~~ Higher Criticism ~~arose~~ and ~~why~~ <sup>the</sup> protest <sup>against it</sup> ~~came~~  
~~came~~ from the same source.

In order to understand <sup>the</sup> tremendous furor that the first books on Higher Criticism provoked it is necessary for us to recall at least two facts, ~~and possibly three~~. The accepted attitude towards the bible, Second allegorical criticism. ~~Third the idea of Evolution.~~  
~~Fourth German Rationalism.~~

### Attitude Towards the Bible.

It is almost impossible for the average person to imagine just how people felt toward the Bible even within so recent a period as 50 or 25 years. But in so brief a time as that so great a change has come about that practically few people hold to ideas that were common but a few years ago. Following passages suggest the attitude.

" " By the inspiration of Holy Scriptures I understand , that the Scriptures were written under the guidance of the Holy Spirit, who communicated to the writers facts before unknown, directed them in the selection of facts known before, and preserved them from error of every kind in the records they made."

Archdeacon Pratt, in "Science and Scripture not at Variance" Cited in Colenso, 44. (1814-1883)

" The Bible is none other than the very Voice of Him that sitteth upon the throne. Every book of it--every chapter of it--every verse--every word of it-- every syllable of it--( where are we to stop ?) every letter of it -- is the direct utterance of the most high. The Bible is none other than the word of God-- not some part of it more, some part of it less, but all alike, the utterance of him who sitteth upon~~x~~ the Throne-- Absolute-- faultless-- unerring--supreme."

Burton's "Inspiration and Interpretation" Page 89,

Cited in Colenso, Page 46.



Or to take a more local declaration by Nathaniel Emmons of Franklin who was one of the leaders of the so-called Berkshire Divinity, we find him saying in a sermon on "the Plenary Inspiration of the Scriptures."

"That the book which we emphatically call the Bible, was written by the inspiration of suggestion."

" And there can be no doubt but the inspiration of suggestion took place , 'when the natural faculties of the sacred penman were superseded , and God spake directly to their minds, making such discoveries to them as they could not <sup>have</sup> other wise obtained, and dictitating the very words in which such discoveries were to be communicated."

" It was this last and highest kind of inspiration , which , we suppose, God was pleased to afford those holy man whom he employed in writing the books of the Old and New Testament. He not only directed them to write, but at the same time suggested what to write. ; so that, according to the literal sense of the text, they wrote exactly <sup>as</sup> ~~what~~ they were moved by the Holy Ghost."

Emmons Works, Vol. IV P 75.

"As late as 1889 one of the two most eloquent pulpit orators in the Church of England, Canon Liddon, preaching at St. Paul's Cathedral , used in his fervor the same dangerous argument ; that the authority of Christ himself, and therefore of Christianity must rest on the old view of the Old Testament. ; that, since the founder of Christianity, in divinely recorded utterances alluded to the transformation of Lot's wife into a pillar of salt, to Noah's ark and the flood, and to the sojourn of Jonah in the whale, the biblical account of these must be ~~given up~~ accepted as historical , or that Christianity must be given up altogether." White. History etc. Vol 2, Page 369.



Lecture III- B 1/  
Allegorical Interpretation.

" To find the spiritual meaning of the sacred text, partly beside the literal, partly by excluding it, became the watchword ~~for~~ the 'scientific' Christian theology which was possible only on this basis, as it endeavored to reduce the immense and dissimilar material of the Old Testament to Unity with the Gospel?"

.....Here , Philo was the Master : For he first to a great extent poured the new wine into old bottles." Such a procedure is warranted by its final purpose ; for history is a unity . But applied in a pedantic and stringently dogmatic way it is the source of deception, of untruthfulness and finally of total blindness."

Harnack , History of Dogma, Vol 1, 126.

In other words the early Jewish Scribes, and the early Christians were forced to a device of "Getting the spiritual sense of Scripture" in order to retain their scripture and apply it to practical life.

~~It is almost incredible~~ The extent to which this ~~method~~ method of interpreting Scripture by allegory, or by getting the spiritual sense of it , <sup>r</sup> has been applied all through the history of the Christian Church, and still is employed is one of the most astonishing facts ~~of history~~ we have to deal with. The Bible not only had its apparent meaning, but its spiritual or allegorical meaning. Only the initiated could know what that allegorical meaning might be. Two or three illustrations of this sort of interpretation: ~~is important~~ will indicate its character.

Philo was the early master of this "spiritual sense" of the scripture delusion, which has raged in ~~an~~ ecclesiastical circles from that day to this, and for which there is no more justification than there is for the spiritual interpretation of the Pittsfield Eagle. In the sixth century an Egyptian monk by a process of spiritual interpretations of a series of



scripture passages, (See White Vol I, 95) constructed theory of the structure of the Universe which the Copernican theory had to combat and overcome centuries later, and established ideas that the doctrine of Evolution in the nineteenth Century had to face.

Special significance was given to numbers in the Scripture. Josephus argued that since there were 22 letters in the Hebrew Alphabet, there must be twenty two sacred books in the Old Testament." ~~Origen's teaching~~

~~St~~ Augustine who is regarded as the fountain head for all orthodox theology has a very strong passage on the mystical meaning of numbers.

" In the mystic power of numbers to reveal the scripture Augustine found special delight. He tells us that there is deep meaning in sundry scriptural uses of the number ~~five~~ forty, and especially as the number of days required for fasting. Forty, he reminds us, is four times ten. Now four, he says, is the number especially representing time, the day and the year, each being divided into four parts; while ten being made up of three and seven, represents knowledge of the Creator and Creature, three referring to the three persons in the triune creator, and the seven referring to the three elements, heart, soul, and mind taken in connection with four elements, fire, air, earth, and water, which go to make up the creature. Therefore this number ten, representing knowledge, being multiplied by four, representing time, admonishes us to life during time according to knowledge-- that is, to fast for forty days." White Vol II, P 298.

~~Some of these spiritual sense interpretations of Augustine had direct effects. Augustine's reading into one of the parables of Jesus which has these~~

While these illustrations are extreme but by no means rare, <sup>has</sup> this method of interpretation/continued right up to the present and is responsible for a vast amount of evil of many kinds. "The Spiritual sense" or the Spiritual interpretation, or the allegorical interpretation of Scripture has been one way of avoiding the glaring inconsistencies, the evident errors, and the many other complications



involved in regarding the Bible as "Supernatural Revelation of God!" If God dictated the writings they cannot be in error. If there is an apparent error, it must appear to be so simply because we do not understand the meaning of the passage. Therefore there must be some other meaning than that which is apparent on the face of it. It must have a spiritual meaning. Take for example the Songs of Solomon.

Taking the ordinary meaning of the language, this book, the Songs of Solomon is a collection of oriental Love poems. They can by no means be regarded as religious or ethical. They are simply passionate oriental Love songs, Very early this difficulty was seen, and by means of the Spiritual interpretation, or allegorical interpretation these poems were held to be symbolic of the Love of Christ for the Church. The first modern man to suggest the real character of the poem paid for it by starvation and death. Luis de Leon ~~was~~ spent five years in a dungeon of the Inquisition for making the same suggestion. Yet in ~~1685~~ the revised version of the Bible, made by the greatest scholars and Churchmen of England and America, ~~this~~ the unsound character of the Spiritual interpretation is accepted, and the Song of Solomon is printed for what it is, " a collection of Love lyrics, or probably an Lyric drama.



Lecture III C --1.

Up to a hundred years ago it was generally assumed that Moses was the author of the Pentateuch. The pentateuch ~~being~~ is the name given to the first five books of the Old Testament, the old Jewish Law, or Torah. Moreover the book was regarded as dictated by God. Moses was not only regarded as the author, but it was held that he was but a penman for God. Pfeiffer a German Lutheran District Supt, or Bishop, said about the beginning of the 17th century that the text of Genesis must be strictly received ; that 'it contains all knowledge human and divine'; that ' twenty eight articles of the Aigsburg confession are to be found in it " ; that ' it is an arsenal of arguments against

Usher in his "Annals " works out the history of the world with such accurateness that he ~~specifies~~ fixes the date of the beginning of creation on "The evening before October 23 in the year 710 of the Julian period." i.e. 4004 B.C.

He dates the flood 1656? and Abraham's birth at 2008 . This work of Usher's is regarded as perhaps the most important work on History between the reformation and 1750.

along the line through ~~the~~ who took a common sense and giving to these books a "common-sense" meaning pointed out the very glaring inconsistencies. Among the earliest of these was a Jewish Rabbi of the 14th century, Aben Ezra . Ezra knew just how popular such ideas were in his time, so he very shrewdly ~~attributed the text to the~~ announced that these were not his own ideas, but the ideas of a Rabbi who had lived a century early and left this unpublished work. At the close of this statement he put these words, "Let him who understands hold his tongue.



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White Vol II 312.

But in spite of the fact that point of view prevailed practically unquestioned until the opening of the last Century , there were a few along the line through ~~the~~ who took a common sense view of the matter and giving to these books a "common-sense" meaning pointed out the very glaring inconsistencies. Among the earliest of these was a Jewish Rabbi of the 14th century, Aben Ezra . Ezra knew just how popular such ideas were in his time, so he very shrewdly ~~attributed them to the~~ announced that these were not his own ideas, but the ideas of a Rabbi who had lived a century early and left this unpublished work. At the close of this statement he put these words, "Let him who understands hold his tongue.



The reformers held to many of the critical views.

"At the same time we can see from Luther's critical attitude how the doctrine of the reformers admitted considerable freedom, in particular with reference to the extent of the canon, but also to several questions of higher criticism. Thus it is to Luther a matter of indifference whether or not Moses wrote the Pentateuch ; the book of ~~Chronicles~~ he definitely pronounces less credible than those of Kings , and he considers <sup>that</sup> the books of Isaiah, Jeremiah, and Hosea probably owe their present form to later hands."

Enc. Brit. 11th Edition. Vol 13 P861.

~~This~~ To this same period belong of the reformers belong Carls-  
stardt , Protestant, and Andreas Maes Catholic both of whom paid a  
very heavy penalty for their heresies .



Thomas Hobbes.

Thomas Hobbes who by "sheer force of his fierce , concentrated intellect" became a master builder in Philosophy " , influencing profoundly Spinoza, Leibnetz, Diderot and Rousseau, . "He hates error and therefore to confute it he shouldered his way into the very sanctuary fo truth ."

In his "Leviathan" published in 1651 he set forth some very new ideas for his time, giving evidence of an essentially ~~seixenx~~ ~~xiixix~~ modern point of view. Among other things he had much to say on matters religious. For this reason he has earned for himself a right to be classed as the pioneer in the great science of "Higher Criticism."

in the 33 Chapter of the Leviathan he asks a number of very pointed questions, and suggests some very far reaching truths. The first statement to attract attention is this.

" Who were the original writers of the several books of Holy Scripture has not been made evident by any sufficient testimony of other history , which is the only proof of a matter of fact."

" First for the Pentateuch .... We read (Deut XXXIV 26) concerning the sepulchre of Moses ' that no man knoweth of his sepulchre to this day.", that is to the day wherein these words were written. "

Many other of the little slips that are incompatable with the idea of Mosaic authorship Hobbes called attention to . nGen. XII 6 contains the sentence, "The Canaanite was then in the land" , a remark impossible to Moses. Also Hobbes called attention to Numbers 21,14 which speaks of the "Books of the Wars of Yahweh."

He concludes that Mowes was not the Author of the Pentateuch.

For his heresies he was put under the ban, and treated generally as an outcast.



Spinoza.

Spinoza , one of the most lovable, ~~and~~ brave , and honest men in all Christian, who has been called the God -intoxicated man. He followed along a great deal further than Hobbes did. In regard to the Pentateuch he concluded that it was written long after Moses but that Moses may have written some books which were used by those who compiled the Pentateuch as we now know it. "

White calls attention to two general Statements made by Spinoza that proved very important. One of these gave the formula which was destined in our own time to save to the Anglican Church a large number of her noblest sons: this was, that ' sacred Scripture contains the Word of God, and in so far as it contains it is incorruptible."

Questionable ethics.



I have spoken of these men in ~~particular~~ particular for the purpose of calling to your attention the fact that this Higher Criticism which broke upon the 19th century and swept everything before it, had had a long history. Following the men I have mentioned came Father Simon, a Good Catholic Priest, who wrote a critical History of the O.T. ~~in~~ which Bossuet pronounced a 'mass of Impieties and a Bulwar of irreligion.' Simon was driven from his position.

Sir Isaac Newton took a similar position concerning the authorship concluding that the Pentateuch ~~was~~ must have been made up from several books, and that Genesis was not written until the reign of Saul.

Lowth in 1753 in "Concerning the Sacred <sup>poetry</sup> ~~History~~ of the Hebrews" put forth the first study of ~~Hebrew Literature~~ of the Bible as Hebrew Literature. The significance of his work was not seen and the heresy was covered under a vast amount of pious language.

In the same year Astruc published his "Conjectures on the Original Memoirs which Moses used in Composing the Book of Genesis."

In this book was brought out for the first time clearly the fact that there were two main narratives that enter into the composition of Genesis etc and that they are distinguished by the word which is used for God. One calls God "Yahweh, and the other calls him "Elohim." Astruc was bitterly denounced both by his own Catholics and by Protestants as a heretic.

Herder, the German Poet suffered also for calling attention to the real nature of "The song of Solomon." Had it not been for Goethe's support it would have gone hard with him.

All these early men who touched upon various aspects of this great problem that was to be the great theological problem of the 19th Century, approached it from some sort of a biased point of view. Eichhorn begins the scientific study.



Eichhorn who published his introduction to O.T. in 1780-83 is commonly called the father of Historical Criticism. In this is developed the that the Pentateuch is made up of fragments of old writings. That it represents the traditions, habits and customs of an Oriental people.

Eichhorn was a deeply religious man , and his work was done for the purpose of bringing back to the Churches the educated people who had left it. He paid for his kindness by most bitter hostility

DeWette in 1806-7 published an introduction to the O.T. which Theodore Parker translated into English for American Students. Graf, Kuenen, and Wellhausen in Germany, Renan in France. Colenso and Driver and Cheyne, Robertson Smith and others in England completed the main outlines of this great task. Many other names belong on the honorable role of scholars who have contributed to what may be regarded as the most astonishing, far-reaching, and complete religious in the history of the Christian Church.

In 1890 Dr. Cheyne, one of the great contributors in this work, and one of the most radical was asked to deliver the Bampton Lectures in 1890. Said Lectures were established to "confirm and establish the Christian faith ; and to confute all heretics and schismatics ; upon the divine authority of the Holy Scriptures ; upon the writings of ~~the~~ the primitive fathers ; ~~and~~ the divinity of the Saviour~~x~~ and of the holy spirit ; and the Creeds."

At that time he said,-

" In 1880 it was still a heresy to accept with all its consequences the plurality of authorship of the 'Book of Isaiah'; in 1890 to a growing school of Church Students this has become an indubitable fact."

In other words at the close of the 19th Century this great change had taken place. Among the great scholars ~~xxx~~ in all the protestant cults , the old idea of plenary inspiration of the Bible had



entirely disappeared. A school of Historical Criticism had grown up in France, Germany, England, and America, which reconstructed the entire Hebrew Literature, Maintained not only that Moses did not write the ~~Old Testament~~ Pentateuch, but that Moses is largely a Legendary Character, and that the Bible as a whole instead of Being a Single supernatural book, inspired by God, is simply the literary remains of the Jewish People, in which is preserved the records of their history, religions and ideas.

As Dr White says the fact that many great men who have accepted this change still have remained in their churches is due to the formula enunciated by Spinoza, "Sacred Scripture contains the Word of God and in so far as it contains it is incorruptable."

I am simply stating here the facts as they are. This is the Change that has taken place. It is profound and not to be dealt with lightly. It brushes aside the accepted teachings, and the accepted point of view of the Christian Church from the days of the Apostles down to the middle of the 19th Century.

I shall from now on speak entirely from this point of ~~view~~ view.



Lecture III D 1.

Several times I have ~~intimated~~ spoken of inconsistencies which caused great difficulty in explanation to those who wished to maintain the old idea of the Literal infallibility of the Bible. Especially in the Pentateuch did these appear. ~~Examples~~

I have said that there were two methods of getting around those difficulties.

A. When the common-sense ~~statement~~ meaning of the passage agree with theological dogmas, the common sense meaning of the passage was accepted.

B. But when the Common sense Meaning did not agree with theological dogmas, it was the custom to give them a ~~theological~~ spiritual or ~~theological~~ allegorical meaning.

But the critical movement said that first and foremost it is necessary to find out if possible the significance of these inconsistent passages in their common sense meaning. I want at this point to refer to ~~some of the~~ two or three of these difficulties that caused so much trouble, and that were the means of guiding men away from the old conception of the Bible to the Modern conception.

Deuteronomy Chapter 34.

This Chapter describes the death of Moses. So far as the language goes it is simple narrative. This always caused a lot of difficulty. Just How a man could describe his own death, and pass judgement upon himself, and then write a sentence like this,

"And there arose not a prophet since in Israel like unto Moses, whom the Lord knew face to face."

Two ways of getting out of the difficulty were resorted to. One was to assert that God told Moses what to write, and under the direction of God, Moses described his own death, and judged as of many years later his supreme place among Hebrew leaders.

Others said that Moses did not write the Last Chapter of



Deuteronomy, but did write all the rest.

But this admitted the Germ of doubt into the conception of the Mosaic authorship of the Pentateuch, a leaven which has leavened the whole lump of the Bible.

~~xxxxxxxxxx~~

Double accounts of the same event , sometimes differeing very much are seen.

Double account of creating Birds and Beasts. Gn. I 21-25.

" " " Man

Gn I 27 Man ~~and woman~~ created ~~and out of dust~~, Male and female ~~from the dust of the earth~~ in the image of God.

Gn. II 7. Man created out of dust, and Woman created from man's Rib.

Or Jacob is advised to flee to Laban . Two accounts ~~Gn. XXII~~

Gn. XXVII 42-45. XXXVIII 1-8.

These are simply one or two illustrations that are to be found for almost every incident. A Double story .



Two distinct stories of creation.

The first one extends to Gn II 4a. The second begins II 4b. Not only are the two stories entirely different in almost every ~~detail~~ so far as language goes, but they are not even consistent duplicates. They are inconsistent, as the chart indicates.

*Order of Creation,*

Gen. I 1-- II 4a.	<i>P.</i>	<i>Ch. # 6</i>	<i>J.</i>
First day. 1-5	Light. Day and night.		No day plan.
Second day 6-8	Firmament.		1st. Dry land.
Third " 9-13	Dry land, seas, <del>Vegetation</del>		2nd. Moisture.
Fourth. 14-19	Vegetation. Heavenly bodies.		3rd. Man
Fifth 20-23	Life in water.		4th Trees etc.
Sixth. <del>Land animals</del>	24-31 Land animals		5th Beasts of field.
	Man in God's image.		6th. Fowls of the Air.
Seventh II 1-3	Rest.		7th. Woman.

You have but to read these two stories to discover that they belong to a different era. One is plainly an old folk myth. The other is an attempt to a late writer to give cosmical explanation to festival days and religious customs, and make it appear that the religious customs of the Jews at the time he was writing were established in the beginning.

Now these modern Higher Critics so-called say. That is very easily explained: The story of creation which begins with ~~Gen. I~~ Gn. II 4b is a primitive Myth, and it belongs to a document which they call J because it uses "Yahweh" or Jehovah for God. It is very old. There are many passages all through the Pentateuch that are just like. ~~It~~ It is one of the old myth incorporated into the literature of Israel.

The Gen. I i - II 4b was written by a priest of the Post Exilic times of the school of Ezra and Nehemiah. He was



interested in maintaining the orthodoxy of the Priestly practises and attempted to give a quasi-scientific explanation of the creation that would account for his festivals, and especially the sabbath as a day of rest.

Story of the Flood. Gen. ~~VI~~ VI 9-- I 17.

J.

P

Chapter V 1-8

Chapter VI 9-32

" VII 1-5

VII 6

7-10

11

12

13-16a

16b-17

18-21

22-23

VII24a --VIII 2a

~~VIII~~

VIII 2b-3a

VIII 3b--5

6-12

13a

13b

14--19

(20--22)

IX 1-17



Lecture III D 4  
Flood.

Facts to be noted.

According to P.

One Pair of every kind of Animal  
VI 18-20.

According to J.

Seven Pairs of Clean and two  
of unclean  
VII 2-3.

But VII 8-9 seems to be an attempt by reviser  
to combine the two. Result fits neither single  
statement.

Second Illustration.

It was 150 days before the waters ~~begin~~ Duration of flood was  
to subside. VIII 3. 40days. VII 12 & VIII 6  
and

It was eight months and 15 days  
before the ~~waters~~ tops of the  
mountains were visible VIII 5  
and

a whole year and 10 days before  
the earth was perfectly dry.  
VIII 14.

Seven days before the  
second dove was sent out  
and brought back an Olive  
leaf.

fourteen or more days when  
the earth was dry.



But the very illuminating incident of Bishop Colenso of South Africa brings us to a much more searching aspect of the situation.

The real and final objection to the old point of view is not scientific, intellectual, but moral.

Colenso was Bishop of South African Diocese of Natal of the Anglican Church. He was a very able/ and very enthusiastic and devoted missionary. He was engaged in the task of Translating the Bible into The Zulu language. By one of his most zealous and believing Zulu workers he was asked concerning the story of the flood, "Is that True?" That question is but symbolic of ~~all~~ the reaction of Christian Missionary activities of the last hundred years.

Colenso, like the great man that he was, began in all seriousness to answer that question. His answer or the record of his gropings were published in "The Pentateuch and the Book of Joshua Critically examined." Published in 1863.

The publication in 1860 the famous "Essays and Reviews" by several prominent preachers in the Church of England had stirred a furious row which was but subsiding a little when this new book of Colenso's appeared. "Essays and Reviews" became the subject of debate in Parliament, and for a time threatened to break the Church of England. But here the Church knuckled to popular intelligence, and on grounds of expediency nothing was done.

But Colenso's book came right on top of the Essays and Reviews. It is a humiliating story, in which the attempt was made to excommunicate Colenso. The matter was brought before the Courts. Among the leaders who prepared the legal plea that was to drive Colenso from his position was ~~the~~ William E. Gladstone, later Prime Minister.

Colenso won the day, in the courts. And that was the last effective stand of the old point of view. With some snarling and



~~surviving~~ they have protested as each decade has seen the tide of the point of view represented by the Higher critics rise higher and higher. Now it is ~~xxx~~ a very rare thing to find any one protest against it.



[The Origin and History of the Bible]

Lecture III: The Origin of the Books of the Old Testament,  
Part 1

Earl C. Davis

1. "Higher Criticism"

Just as in the lecture last Sunday we used the New Testament to illustrate the nature, necessity for, and some of the results of that science of textual criticism, so tonight we are using the Old Testament or portions of it to illustrate the nature of, the necessity for, and some of the results of "higher criticism." This also is a phrase which is very much misunderstood. To many it is [the] last and greatest evil in the world. As a matter of fact, it is simply a branch of literary study. As increasing numbers of literary monuments of antiquity were placed before us, and our interest in them, as records and survivals of the past, compelled us to study them, we developed naturally this science which is sometimes called, "historical criticism," and sometimes "higher criticism," to distinguish from textual or "lower" criticism.

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2. Outline of Lecture

Purpose, to show the great change that has taken place in the attitude of men toward the Bible during the past century.

Section one, A [4]. Attitude towards the Bible  
Section two, B [5]. Allegorical Interpretation  
Section three, C [6] Early exponents of new views  
Section four, D [7] School of modern criticism  
Section five, E [8] Problems to be met



General result. Bible not a book, but a literature.

### 3. Leaders in Criticism

Aben Ezra<sup>1</sup> ..... 1365

#### *Reformers—16<sup>th</sup> Century*

Hobbes<sup>2</sup> ..... *Leviathan* ..... 1651

Spinoza<sup>3</sup> ..... 1670

Father Simon<sup>4</sup> ..... France (Cath) ..... 1678

Isaac Newton<sup>5</sup> ..... 1705

Lowth<sup>6</sup> ..... "De Sacra Poesi" ..... 1753

Jean Astruc<sup>7</sup> ..... "Conjectures" ..... 1753

Herder<sup>8</sup> ..... 1782

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<sup>1</sup> Abraham ibn Ezra (1089-1167) distinguished Jewish biblical commentator.

<sup>2</sup> Thomas Hobbes (1588-1679) English philosopher, author of the influential 1651 book *Leviathan*.

<sup>3</sup> Baruch Spinoza (1632-1677) Jewish Dutch philosopher, author of the 1670 book *Tractatus Theologico-Politicus*.

<sup>4</sup> Richard Simon (1638-1712) French priest and influential Biblical critic, author of the 1678 book *Histoire Critique du Vieux Testament*.

<sup>5</sup> Isaac Newton (1642-1727) English polymath, mathematician, physicist, astronomer, alchemist, theologian, author of a book posthumously published in 1733, *Observations upon the Prophecies of Daniel, and the Apocalypse of St. John*.

<sup>6</sup> Robert Lowth (1710-1787) English priest who studied Biblical poetry, author of the 1753 book *De Sacra Poesi Hebraeorum*.

<sup>7</sup> Jean Astruc (1684-1766) French professor of medicine, author of the first treatise on syphilis; also author of an anonymously published book, *Conjectures*, of critical textual analyses of the Bible.

<sup>8</sup> Johann Gottfried Herder (1744-1803) German philosopher and theologian, author of the 1782 book, *On the Spirit of Hebrew Poetry*.



*Modern*

Eichhorn <sup>9</sup> .....	Introduction to OT.....	1780-83
DeWette <sup>10</sup> .....	Introduction to OT.....	1806-07
Parker. T <sup>11</sup> . .....	American.....	1843
Well Hausen <sup>12</sup> .....	Prolegomena.....	1894
Colenso <sup>13</sup> .....	Pentateuch.....	1862
Driver <sup>14</sup> .....	Introduction.....	1891

4. A: Attitude Towards the Bible

Higher criticism and the protest against it sprung from the same source.

In order to understand the tremendous furor that the first books on higher criticism provoked it is necessary for us to recall at least two facts. The accepted attitude towards the Bible. Second allegorical criticism.

*Attitude Towards the Bible.* It is almost impossible for the average person to imagine just how people felt toward the Bible even within so recent a period as 50 or 25 years. But in so brief a time as that so great a change has come about that practically few people hold to ideas that were common but a few years ago. Following passages suggest this attitude.

By the inspiration of Holy Scripture I understand that the Scriptures were written under the guidance of the

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<sup>9</sup> Johann Gottfried Eichhorn (1752-1827) German Protestant theologian, author of the five-volume treatise *Einleitung in das Alte Testament*, 1780-83.

<sup>10</sup> Wilhelm Martin Leberecht de Wette (1780-1849) German theologian and Biblical scholar, author of the two-volume *Beiträge zur Einleitung in das Alte Testament*, 1806-07.

<sup>11</sup> Theodore Parker (1810-1860) American transcendentalist and reforming minister of the Unitarian church, author of a radical theological 1841 sermon, "A Discourse on the Transient and Permanent in Christianity."

<sup>12</sup> Julius Wellhausen (1844-1918) German Biblical scholar, author of the 1894 book *Israelitische und Jüdische Geschichte*.

<sup>13</sup> John Colenso (1814-1883) English cleric and mathematician and author of the 1862 book *The Pentateuch and Book of Joshua Critically Examined*.

<sup>14</sup> Samuel Rolles Driver (1846-1914) English divine and Hebrew scholar, author of the 1890 book *Notes on the Hebrew Text of the Books of Samuel*.

Holy Spirit, who communicated to the writers facts before unknown, directed them in the selection of facts known before, and preserved them from error of every kind in the records they made.

Archdeacon Pratt, in "Science and Scripture not at Variance," cited in Colenso, 44 (1814-1883).<sup>15</sup>

The Bible is none other than the *Voice of Him that sitteth upon the Throne!* Every book of it—every chapter of it—every verse of it—every word of it—every syllable of it—(where are we to stop?)—every *letter* of it—is the direct utterance of the most high! The Bible is none other than the word of God—not some part of it more, some part of it less, but all alike, the utterance of him who sitteth upon the throne—absolute—faultless—unerring—supreme.

Burgon's "Inspiration and Interpretation," Page 89, Cited in Colenso, Page 46.<sup>16</sup>

Or to take a more local declaration by Nathaniel Emmons of Franklin, who was one of the leaders of the so-called Berkshire Divinity, we find him saying in a sermon on "The Plenary Inspiration of the Scriptures,"

That the book which we emphatically call the Bible, was written by the inspiration of suggestion.

...

And there can be no doubt but the inspiration of suggestion took place, "when the natural faculties of the sacred penmen were superseded, and God spake directly to their minds, making such discoveries to them as they could not have otherwise obtained, and dictating the very words in which such discoveries were to be communicated."

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<sup>15</sup> John Pratt (1809-1871) British clergyman and archdeacon of Calcutta from 1850 until his death. His book, *Science and Scripture Not at Variance* was first published in 1856. John Colenso (see note 13 above) quoted Pratt in his 1862 *The Pentateuch and Book of Joshua Critically Examined*, London: Longman, Green, Longman, Roberts and Green, p. 4.

<sup>16</sup> John Burgon (1813-1888) English Anglican, Dean of Chichester Cathedral from 1876 until his death. His book, *Inspiration and Interpretation: Seven Sermons Preached before the University of Oxford*, was first published in 1861. John Colenso (see note 13 above) quoted Burgon in his 1862 *The Pentateuch and Book of Joshua Critically Examined*, London: Longman, Green, Longman, Roberts and Green, p. 6.



It was this last and highest kind of inspiration, which, we suppose, God was pleased to afford those holy men whom he employed in writing the books of the Old and New Testament. He not only directed them to write, but at the same time *suggested* what to write; so that, according to the literal sense of the text, they wrote exactly as they were moved by the Holy Ghost. Emmons, *Works*, Vol. IV, p. 75.<sup>17</sup>

As late as 1889 one of the two most eloquent pulpit orators in the Church of England, Canon Liddon, preaching at St. Paul's Cathedral, used in his fervor the same dangerous argument: that the authority of Christ himself, and therefore of Christianity, must rest on the old view of the Old Testament; that, since the founder of Christianity, in divinely recorded utterances, alluded to the transformation of Lot's wife into a pillar of salt, to Noah's ark and the Flood, and the sojourn of Jonah in the whale, the biblical account of these must be accepted as historical, or that Christianity must be given up altogether. White. *History* etc. Vol 3, page 369.<sup>18</sup>

## 5. B: Allegorical Interpretations

To find the spiritual meaning of the sacred text, partly beside the literal, partly by excluding it, became the watchword for the "scientific" Christian theology which was possible only on the basis, as it endeavored to reduce the immense and dissimilar material of the Old Testament to unity with the Gospel, ... Here, Philo was the Master; for he, first to a great extent, poured the new wine into old bottles. Such a procedure is warranted by its final purpose; for history is a unity. But applied in

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<sup>17</sup> Nathanael Emmons (1745-1840) American Congregational minister and influential theologian of the New Divinity, or the Berkshire Divinity. This quote from "Sermon V. The Plenary Inspiration of the Scriptures," in Nathanael Emmons, *A System of Divinity*, Jacob Ide, ed., Boston: Croker & Brewster, 1842, Vol. I of Nathanael Emmons' *Works*, pp. 74-75 (not Vol IV as Davis has written here).

<sup>18</sup> Andrew Dickson White (1832-1918) American historian and educator, co-founder and first president of Cornell University. This quote from his *History of the Warfare of Science with Theology in Christendom*, 1896, p. 369.

a pedantic and stringently dogmatic way, it is the source of deception, of untruthfulness and finally of total blindness.

Harnack, *History of Dogma*, Vol. 1, 116.<sup>19</sup>

In other words, the early Jewish scribes, and the early Christians were forced to a device of "getting the spiritual sense of Scripture" in order to retain their scripture and apply it to practical life.

The extent to which this method of interpreting Scripture by allegory, or by getting the spiritual sense of it, has been applied all through the history of the Christian Church, and still is employed, is one of the most astonishing facts we have to deal with. The Bible not only had its apparent meaning, but its spiritual or allegorical meaning. Only the initiated could know what that allegorical meaning might be. Two or three illustrations of this sort of interpretation will indicate its character.

Philo was the early master of this "spiritual sense" of the scripture delusion, which has raged in ecclesiastical circles from that day to this, and for which there is no more justification than there is for the spiritual interpretation of the *Pittsfield Eagle*<sup>20</sup>. In the sixth century an Egyptian monk by a process of spiritual interpretations of a series of scripture passages (see White, Vol 1, 95) constructed [a] theory of the structure of the Universe which the Copernican theory had to combat and overcome centuries later, and established ideas that the doctrine of evolution in the nineteenth century had to face.

Special significance was given to numbers in the Scripture. Josephus argued that since there were 22 letters in the Hebrew alphabet, there must be twenty-two sacred books in the Old Testament. Augustine, who is regarded as the fountainhead for all orthodox theology has a very strong passage on the mystical meaning of numbers:

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<sup>19</sup> Adolf von Harnack (1851-1930) German Lutheran theologian and prominent church historian. This quote is from his, *History of Dogma*, translated from the third German edition by Neil Buchanan, Boston: Roberts Brothers, 1897 (first published in 1885), Vol. 1, p. 116.

<sup>20</sup> The *Pittsfield Eagle* was one of the daily newspapers in Pittsfield, Massachusetts where Earl C. Davis was minister of the Unity Church from 1905 to 1919.



In the mystic power of numbers to reveal the scripture, Augustine found special delight. He tells us that there is deep meaning in sundry scriptural uses of the number forty, and especially as the number of days required for fasting. Forty, he reminds us, is four times ten. Now four, he says, is the number especially representing time, the day and the year, each being divided into four parts; while ten being made up of three and seven, represents knowledge of the Creator and Creature, three referring to the three persons in the triune Creator, and the seven referring to the three elements, heart, soul, and mind, taken in connection with four elements, fire, air, earth, and water, which go to make up the creature. Therefore this number ten, representing knowledge, being multiplied by four, representing time, admonishes us to life during time according to knowledge—that is, to fast for forty days. White, Vol. II, P 298.<sup>21</sup>

While these illustrations are extreme, but by no means rare, this method of interpretation has continued right up to the present and is responsible for a vast amount of evil of many kinds. "The Spiritual sense" or the Spiritual interpretation, or the allegorical interpretation of Scripture has been one way of avoiding the glaring inconsistencies, the evident errors, and the many other complications involved in regarding the Bible as "Supernatural Revelation of God." If God dictated the writings, they cannot be in error. If there is an apparent error, it must appear to be so simply because we do not understand the meaning of the passage. Therefore, there must be some other meaning than that which is apparent on the face of it. It must have a spiritual meaning. Take for example the Songs of Solomon.

Taking the ordinary meaning of the language, this book, the Songs of Solomon, is a collection of oriental love poems. They can by no means be regarded as religious or ethical. They are simply passionate oriental love songs. Very early this difficulty was seen, and by means of the spiritual interpretation, or allegorical interpretation, these poems were held to be symbolic of the Love of Christ for the Church. The first modern man to suggest the real character of the poem paid for it by starvation and death. Luis de Leon spent five years in a dungeon on the Inquisition for making the same suggestion. Yet in the revised version of the Bible, made by the greatest

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<sup>21</sup> Andrew Dickson White, *History of the Warfare of Science with Theology in Christendom*, 1896, v. II, p. 298.

scholars and churchmen of England and America, the unsound character of the spiritual interpretation is accepted, and the Songs of Solomon is printed for what it is, a collection of love lyrics, or probably a lyric drama.

#### 6. C: Early Exponents of New Views

Up to a hundred years ago it was generally assumed that Moses was the author of the Pentateuch. The Pentateuch is the name given to the first five books of the Old Testament, the old Jewish Law, or Torah. Moreover, the book was regarded as dictated by God. Moses was not only regarded as the author, but it was held that he was but a penman for God. Pfeiffer, a German Lutheran District Supt, or Bishop, said about the beginning of the 17<sup>th</sup> century that the text of Genesis:

"must be received strictly;" that "it contains all knowledge human and divine;" that "twenty-eight articles of the Augsburg confession are to be found in it;" that "it is an arsenal of arguments against all sects and sorts of atheists, pagans, Jews, Turks, Tartars, papists, Calvinists, Socinians, and Baptists;" "the source of all sciences and arts, including law, medicine, philosophy and rhetoric;" "the source and essence of all histories and of all professions, trades, and works;" "an exhibition of all virtues and vices;" the origin of all consolation."

White, Vol II, 312.<sup>22</sup>

Ussher, in his "Annals," works out the history of the world with such accurateness that he fixes the date of the beginning of creation on "The evening before October 23 in the year 710 of the old Julian period." i.e., 4004 B.C. He dates the flood [to] 1656 [B.C.E.] and Abraham's birth at 2008 [B.C.E.]. This work of Usher's is regarded as perhaps the most important work on history between the reformation and 1750.<sup>23</sup>

But in spite of the fact that that point of view prevailed practically unquestioned until the opening of the last century,

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<sup>22</sup> Andrew Dickson White, *History of the Warfare of Science with Theology in Christendom*, 1896, v. II, p. 312.

<sup>23</sup> James Ussher (1581-1656) Church of Ireland Archbishop of Armagh and Primate of all Ireland between 1625 and 1656. In 1650 he published a chronology of the history of the world, *Annales Veteris Testamenti, Annals of the Old Testament*.



there were a few along the line through who took a commonsense view of the matter and giving to these books a "commonsense" meaning pointed out the very glaring inconsistencies. Among the earliest of these was a Jewish Rabbi of the 14<sup>th</sup> century, Aben Ezra. Ezra knew just how popular such ideas were in his time, so he very shrewdly announced that these were not his own ideas, but the ideas of a Rabbi who lived a century earlier and left this unpublished work. At the close of this statement, he put these words, "Let him who understands hold his tongue."

The reformers held to many of the critical views.

At the same time we can see from Luther's attitude how the doctrine of the reformers ... admitted considerable freedom, in particular with reference to the extent of the canon, but also to several questions of higher criticism. Thus it is to Luther a matter of indifference whether or not Moses wrote the Pentateuch; the book of Chronicles he definitely pronounces less credible than those of Kings, and he considers that the books of Isaiah, Jeremiah, and Hosea probably owe their present form to later hands.

*Enc. Brit.* 11<sup>th</sup> Edition Vol. 13, p861.<sup>24</sup>

To this same period of the reformers belong Carlstadt,<sup>25</sup> Protestant, and Andreas Maes,<sup>26</sup> Catholic, both of whom paid a very heavy penalty for their heresies.

*Thomas Hobbes.* Thomas Hobbes, who by "sheer force of his fierce, concentrated intellect became a master builder in philosophy," influencing profoundly Spinoza, Leibnitz, Diderot and Rousseau.<sup>27</sup> "He hates error and therefore to confute it he shouldered his way into the very sanctuary of truth."<sup>28</sup>

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<sup>24</sup> *Encyclopedia Britannica*, 11<sup>th</sup> edition, 1910, volume 3 (not 13), p. 861, part of the article on the "Bible," sub-section, "The Reformers."

<sup>25</sup> Andreas Karlstadt (1486-1541) German Protestant theologian.

<sup>26</sup> Andreas Maes (or Masius) (1514-1573) Flemish Catholic priest.

<sup>27</sup> Baruch Spinoza (1632-1677), Gottfried Wilhelm Leibniz (1646-1716), Denis Diderot (1713-1784), Jean-Jacques Rousseau (1712-1778), all significant philosophers and theologians from the Enlightenment.

<sup>28</sup> Quote from an essay by W.G. Pogson Smith (1863-1907) that prefixed Pogson Smith's 1909 reprint edition of Hobbes' 1651 *Leviathan*.

In his *Leviathan*, published in 1651, he set forth some very new ideas for his time, giving evidence of an essentially modern point of view. Among other things he had much to say on matters religious. For this reason, he has earned for himself a right to be classed as the pioneer in the great science of "higher criticism."

In the 33<sup>rd</sup> chapter of the *Leviathan* he asks a number of very pointed questions and suggests some very far-reaching truths. The first statement to attract attention is this:

Who were the original writers of the several books of Holy Scripture has not been made evident by any sufficient testimony of other history, which is the only proof of a matter of fact.

...

[And] first for the Pentateuch ... We read [in the last chapter of Deuteronomy verse 6] (Deut 34 6) concerning the sepulcher of Moses, "that no man knoweth of his sepulcher to this day" that is to the day wherein these words were written.<sup>29</sup>

Many other of the little slips that are incompatible with the idea of Mosaic authorship Hobbes called attention to. Genesis 12:6 contains the sentence, "The Canaanite was then in the land," a remark impossible to Moses. Also, Hobbes called attention to Numbers 21:14, which speaks of the "Books of the Wars of Yahweh."

He concludes that Moses was not the author of the Pentateuch. For his heresies he was put under the ban and treated generally as an outcast.

*Baruch Spinoza*. Spinoza, one of the most lovable, brave, and honest men in all Christian [sic], who has been called the God-intoxicated man. He followed along a great deal further than Hobbes did. In regard to the Pentateuch, he concluded that it was written long after Moses, but that Moses may have written some books which were used by those who compiled the Pentateuch as we know it.

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<sup>29</sup> Thomas Hobbes, *Leviathan or the Matter, Form and Power of a Commonwealth, ecclesiastical and Civil*, Fourth edition, London, George Routledge and Sons, 1894 (first published 1651) pp. 172-3.



White calls attention to two general statements made by Spinoza that proved very important. One of these gave the formula which was destined in our own time to save the Anglican Church a large number of her noblest sons. That was that "sacred Scripture contains the Word of God, and in so far as it contains it, is incorruptible."<sup>30</sup>

Questionable ethics.

I have spoken of these men in particular for the purpose of calling to your attention the fact that this higher criticism which broke upon the 19<sup>th</sup> century and swept everything before it, had had a long history. Following the men I have mentioned came Father Simon,<sup>31</sup> a good Catholic priest, who wrote a critical History of the OT which Bossuet pronounced a "mass of impieties and a bulwark of irreligion."<sup>32</sup> Simon was driven from his position.

Sir Isaac Newton<sup>33</sup> took a similar position concerning the authorship, concluding that the Pentateuch must have been made up from several books, and the Genesis was not written until the reign of Saul.

Lowth<sup>34</sup> in 1753, in [his] *Concerning the Sacred poetry of the Hebrews* put forth the first study of the Bible as Hebrew literature. The significance of his work was not seen and the heresy was covered under a vast amount of pious language.

In the same year, Astruc<sup>35</sup> published his "Conjectures on the Original Memoirs which Moses used in Composing the Book of

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<sup>30</sup> Andrew Dickson White, *History of the Warfare of Science with Theology in Christendom*, 1896, p. 318.

<sup>31</sup> Richard Simon (1638-1712) French priest and influential Biblical critic, author of the 1678 book *Histoire Critique du Vieux Testament*.

<sup>32</sup> Jacques-Bénigne Lignel Bossuet (1627-1707) French bishop and theologian. He is quoted in Andrew Dickson White, *History of the Warfare of Science with Theology in Christendom*, 1896, p. 319.

<sup>33</sup> Isaac Newton (1642-1727) English polymath, mathematician, physicist, astronomer, alchemist, theologian, author of a book posthumously published in 1733, *Observations upon the Prophecies of Daniel, and the Apocalypse of St. John*.

<sup>34</sup> Robert Lowth (1710-1787) English priest who studied Biblical poetry, author of the 1753 book *De Sacra Poesi Hebraeorum*.

<sup>35</sup> Jean Astruc (1684-1766) French professor of medicine, author of the first treatise on syphilis; also author of an anonymously

Genesis." In this book was brought out for the first time clearly the fact that there were two main narratives that enter into the composition of Genesis, etc., and that they are distinguished by the word which is used for God. One calls God, "Yahweh," and the other calls him "Elohim." Astruc was bitterly denounced both by his own Catholics and by Protestants as a heretic.

Herder,<sup>36</sup> the German poet suffered also for calling attention to the real nature of "The Song of Solomon." Had it not been for Goethe's support it would have gone hard on him.

All these early men who touched upon various aspects of this great problem that was to be the great theological problem of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, approached it from the same sort of a biased point of view. Eichhorn<sup>37</sup> begins the scientific study.

Eichhorn, who published his introduction to the OT in 1780-83 is commonly called the father of historical criticism. In this is developed the [thesis] that the Pentateuch is made up of fragments of old writings. That it represents the traditions, habits, and customs of an oriental people.

Eichhorn was a deeply religious man, and his work was done for the purpose of bringing back to the churches the educated people who had left it. He paid for his kindness by most bitter hostility.

DeWette,<sup>38</sup> in 1806-7 published an introduction to the OT which Theodore Parker<sup>39</sup> translated into English for American students.

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published book, *Conjectures*, of critical textual analyses of the Bible.

<sup>36</sup> Johann Gottfried Herder (1744-1803) German philosopher and theologian, author of the 1782 book, *On the Spirit of Hebrew Poetry*.

<sup>37</sup> Johann Gottfried Eichhorn (1752-1827) German Protestant theologian, author of the five-volume treatise *Einleitung in das Alte Testament*, 1780-83.

<sup>38</sup> Wilhelm Martin Leberecht de Wette (1780-1849) German theologian and Biblical scholar, author of the two-volume *Beiträge zur Einleitung in das Alte Testament*, 1806-07.

<sup>39</sup> Theodore Parker (1810-1860) American transcendentalist and reforming minister of the Unitarian church. His translation of de Wette's *A Critical and Historical Introduction to the Canonical Scriptures of the Old Testament*, first appeared in English in 1843.



Graf, Kuenen, and Wellhausen in Germany, Renan in France, Colenso and Driver and Cheyne, Robertson Smith<sup>40</sup> and others in England completed the main outlines of this great task. Many other names belong on the honorable role of scholars who have contributed to what may be regarded as the most astonishing, far-reaching, and complete religious [sic] in the history of the Christian Church.

In 1890, Dr. Cheyne, one of the great contributors in this work, and one of the most radical, was asked to deliver the Bampton Lectures in 1890. Said Lectures were established to "confirm and establish the Christian faith; and to confute all heretics and schisimatics; upon the divine authority of the Holy Scriptures; upon the writings of the primitive fathers; the divinity of the Savior and of the holy spirit; and the creeds."<sup>41</sup>

At that time, he said,

In 1880 it was still a heresy to accept with all its consequences the plurality of authorship of the Book of Isaiah; in 1890 to a growing school of church students this has become an indubitable fact.<sup>42</sup>

In other words, at the close of the 19<sup>th</sup> century this great change had taken place. Among the great scholars in all the Protestant cults, the old idea of plenary inspiration of the Bible had entirely disappeared. A school of historical criticism had grown up in France, Germany, England and America, which reconstructed the entire Hebrew literature, maintained not only that Moses did not write the Pentateuch, but that Moses is largely a legendary character, and that the Bible as a whole instead of being a single supernatural book, inspired by God, is

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<sup>40</sup> Karl Heinrich Graf (1816-1869); Abraham Kuenen (1828-1891); Julius Wellhausen (1844-1918); Joseph Ernest Renan (1823-1892); John Colenso (1814-1883); Samuel Rolles Driver (1846-1914); Thomas Kelly Cheyne (1841-1915); William Robertson Smith (1846-1894).

<sup>41</sup> The Bampton Lectures at the University of Oxford were founded by a bequest of John Bampton (1690-1751) and have taken place since 1790. According to a list of Bampton lecturers, Thomas Kelly Cheyne gave the lecture, "The Origin and Contents of the Psalter," in 1889.

<sup>42</sup> Quoted and discussed in the *Encyclopedia Britannica*, 11<sup>th</sup> edition, 1910, volume 3, p. 863, part of the article on the "Bible," sub-section, "Influence of Criticisms."

simply the literary remains of the Jewish people, in which is preserved the records of their history, religions and ideas.

As Dr. White says, the fact that many great men, who have accepted this change, still have remained in their churches is due to the formula enunciated by Spinoza, "Sacred Scripture contains the Word of God and, insofar as it contains it, is incorruptible."<sup>43</sup>

I am simply stating here the facts as they are. This is the change that has taken place. It is profound and not to be dealt with lightly. It brushes aside the accepted teachings, and the accepted point of view of the Christian Church from the days of the Apostles down to the middle of the 19<sup>th</sup> century.

I shall from now on speak entirely from this point of view.

#### 7. D: School of Modern Criticism

Several times I have spoken of inconsistencies which caused great difficulty in explanation to those who wished to maintain the old idea of the literal infallibility of the Bible. Especially in the Pentateuch did these appear. I have said that there were two methods of getting around these difficulties.

- A. When the common-sense meaning of the passage agrees with theological dogma, the commonsense meaning of the passage was accepted.
- B. But when the commonsense meaning did not agree with theological dogma, it was the custom to give them a spiritual or allegorical meaning.

But the critical movement said that first and foremost it is necessary to find out, if possible, the significance of these inconsistent passages in their commonsense meaning. I want at this point to refer to two or three of these difficulties that caused so much trouble, and that were the means of guiding men away from the old conception of the Bible to the modern conception.

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<sup>43</sup> Quoted in Andrew Dickson White, *History of the Warfare of Science with Theology in Christendom*, 1896, p. 318.



## 8. E: Problems to be Met

[a. *Deuteronomy, written by Moses, describes the death of Moses:*] Deuteronomy Chapter 34. This chapter describes the death of Moses. So far as the language goes it is simple narrative. This always caused a lot of difficulty. Just how a man could describe his own death, and pass judgement upon himself, and then write a sentence like this, "And there arose not a prophet since Israel like unto Moses, whom the Lord knew face to face."<sup>44</sup>

Two ways of getting out of the difficulty were resorted to. One was to assert that God told Moses what to write, and under the direction of God, Moses described his own death, and judged, as of many years later, his supreme place among Hebrew leaders.

Others said the Moses did not write the last chapter of Deuteronomy but did write all the rest.

But this admitted the germ of doubt into the conception of the Mosaic authorship of the Pentateuch, a leaven which has leavened the whole lump of the bible.

[b. *Double accounts of creation:*] Double accounts of the same event, sometimes differing very much are seen.

Double account of creating Birds and Beasts (Genesis 1:21-25)

Double account of creating Man.

Genesis 1-27, Man created, male and female, in the image of God.

Genesis 2:7, Man created out of dust, and woman created from man's rib.

Or Jacob is advised to flee to Laban. Two accounts,

Genesis 28:42-45;

Genesis 28:1-8.

These are simply one or two illustrations that are to be found for almost every incident. A double story.

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<sup>44</sup> Deuteronomy 34:10.

## Order of Creation

	<i>Genesis 1:1-2:4a</i>	<i>Genesis 2:4bff</i>
First day	Gen 1:1-5, Light, day and night	No day plan
Second day	Gen 1:6-8, Firmament	1 <sup>st</sup> Dry land
Third day	Gen 1:9-13, dry land, seas, Vegetation	2 <sup>nd</sup> Moisture
Fourth day	Gen 1:14-19, Heavenly bodies	3 <sup>rd</sup> Man
Fifth day	Gen 1:20-23, Life in water	4 <sup>th</sup> Trees etc.
Sixth day	Gen 1:24-31, Land animals, Man in God's image	5 <sup>th</sup> Beasts of field
Seventh day	Gen 2:1-3, Rest	6 <sup>th</sup> Fouls of the air. 7 <sup>th</sup> Woman

[c. *Double accounts of the flood:*] *Two distinct stories of creation.* The first one extends to Genesis 2:4a. The second begins Genesis 2:4b. Not only are the two stories entirely different in almost every way, so far as language goes, but they are not even consistent duplicates. They are inconsistent, as the chart indicates.

You have but to read these two stories to discover that they belong to a different era. One is plainly an old folk myth. The other is an attempt of a late writer to give cosmical explanation to festival days and religious customs, and [to] make it appear that the religious customs of the Jews at the time he was writing were established in the beginning.

Now, these modern higher critics, so-called, say, that is very easily explained. The story of creation which begins with Genesis 2:4b is a primitive myth, and it belongs to a document which they call, "J" because it uses "Yahweh" or "Jehovah" for God. It is very old. There are many passages all through the Pentateuch that are just like. It is one of the old myths incorporated into the literature of Israel.

The Genesis 1:1-2:4b was written by a priest of the post-Exilic times of the school of Ezra and Nehemiah. He was interested in maintaining the orthodoxy of the Priestly practices and attempted to give a quasi-scientific explanation of the creation that would account for his festivals, and especially the sabbath as a day of rest.



***Story of the Flood, Genesis 6:9-9:17***

*J*

*P*

Genesis 6:1-8	
Genesis 7:1-5	Genesis 6:9-32
Genesis 7:7-10	Genesis 7:6
Genesis 7:12	Genesis 7:11
Genesis 7:16b-17	Genesis 7:13-16a
Genesis 7:22-23	Genesis 7:18-21
Genesis 8:2b-3a	Genesis 7:24a-8:2a
Genesis 8:6-12	Genesis 8:3b:5
Genesis 8:13b	Genesis 8:13a
Genesis 8:20-22	Genesis 8:14-19
	Genesis 9:1-17

**Flood: Facts to be noted**

*According to J*

*According to P*

Seven pairs of clean and two of unclean Genesis 7:2-3	One pair of every kind of animal Genesis 6:18-20
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But Genesis 7:8-9 seems to be an attempt by reviser to combine the two. [The] result fits neither single statement.

*Second Illustration*

*According to J*

Duration of flood was  
40 days

Genesis 7:12 & 8:6

It was seven days before  
the second dove was sent  
out and brought back  
an olive leaf

*According to P*

It was 150 days  
before the waters  
subsided

Genesis 8:3

It was eight months  
and 15 days before  
the tops of the  
mountains were  
visible  
Genesis 8:5

And...

... fourteen or more days  
when the earth was  
dry

... a whole year and  
10 days before the  
earth was perfectly  
dry.  
Genesis 8:14

But the very illuminating incident of Bishop Colenso of South Africa brings us to a much more searching aspect of the situation. The real and final objection to the old point of view is not scientific, intellectual, but moral.

Colenso was Bishop of [the] South African Diocese of Natal of the Anglican Church. He was a very able and very enthusiastic and devoted missionary. He was engaged in the task of translating the Bible into the Zulu language. By one of his most zealous and believing Zulu workers he was asked concerning the story of the flood, "Is that true?" That question is but symbolic of the reaction of Christian missionary activities of the last hundred years.

Colenso, like the great man that he was, began in all seriousness to answer that question. His answer or the record of his gropings were published in *The Pentateuch and the Book of Joshua Critically Examined*, published in 1863.

The publication in 1860 [of] the famous *Essays and Reviews* by several prominent preachers in the Church of England had stirred a furious row which was but subsiding a little when this new book of Colenso's appeared. *Essays and Reviews* became the



subject of debate in Parliament, and for a time threatened to break the Church of England. But here the Church knuckled to popular intelligence, and on grounds of expediency nothing was done.

But Colenso's book came right on top of the *Essays and Reviews*. It was a humiliating story, in which the attempt was made to excommunicate Colenso. The matter was brought before the courts. Among the leaders who prepared the legal plea that was to drive Colenso from his position was William E. Gladstone, later Prime Minister.

Colenso won the day, in the courts. And that was the last effective stand of the old point of view. With some snarling they have protested as each decade has seen the tide of the point of view represented by the higher critics rise higher and higher. Now it is a very rare thing to find anyone protest against it.

[In a separate document, Davis created a diagram of the historical origins of the various elements of the Old Testament. I reproduce this below.]

