

the higher criticism of the pentateuch william henry green, d.d., ll.d. professor of oriental and old testament literature in princeton theological seminary.

Nor, on the other hand, are the additions made from time to time of a uniform pattern, as though the separate value of each new revelation consisted merely in the fact that an increment was thereby made to the body of divine truth previously imparted. Upon the lowest view that can possibly be taken of this volume, if it were simply the record of the successive stages of the development of the Hebrew mind, it might be expected to possess an organic structure and to exhibit a gradually unfolding scheme, as art, philosophy, and literature among every people have each its characteristics and laws, which govern its progress and determine the measure and direction of its growth. But rightly viewed as the word of God, communicated to men for his own wise and holy ends, it may with still greater confidence be assumed that the order and symmetry which characterize all the works of the Most High, will be visible here likewise; that the divine skill and intelligence will be conspicuous in the method as well as in the matter of his disclosures; and that these will be found to be possessed of a structural arrangement in which all the parts are wisely disposed, and stand in clearly defined mutual relations. The Old Testament is a product of the Spirit of God, wrought out through the instrumentality of many human agents, who were all inspired by him, directed by him, and adapted by him to the accomplishment of his own fixed end. There is a divine reason why every part is what it is and where it is; why God spake unto, the fathers at precisely those sundry times and in just those divers portions, in which he actually revealed his will. And though this may not in every instance be ascertainable by us, yet careful and reverent study will disclose it not only in its general outlines, but also in a multitude of its minor details; and will show that the transpositions and alterations, which have been proposed as improvements, are dislocations and disfigurements, which mar and deface the well-proportioned whole. In looking for the evidences of an organic structure in the Scriptures, according to which all its parts are disposed in harmonious unity, and each part stands in a definite and intelligible relation to every other, as well as to the grand design of the whole, it will be necessary to group and classify the particulars, or the student will lose himself in the multiplicity of details, and never rise to any clear conception of the whole. Every fact, every institution every person, every doctrine, every utterance of the Bible has its place and its function in the general plan. And the evidence of the correctness of any scheme proposed as the plan of the Scriptures will lie mainly in its harmonizing throughout with all these details, giving a rational and satisfactory account of the purpose and design of each and assigning to all their just place and relations. But if one were to occupy himself with these details in the first instance, he would be distracted and confused by their multitude, without the possibility of arriving thus at any clear or satisfactory result. The first important aid in the process of grouping or classification is afforded by the separate books of which the Scriptures are composed. Each represents the special task allotted to one particular organ of the Holy Spirit, either the entire function assigned to him in the general plan, or, in the case where the same inspired penman wrote more than one book of different characters and belonging to different classes, his function in one given sphere or direction. Thus the books of Isaiah, Ezekiel, and Malachi exhibit to us that part in the plan of divine revelation which each of those distinguished servants of God was commissioned to perform. The book of Psalms represents the task allotted to David and the other inspired writers of song in the instruction and edification of the people of God. The books of Moses may be said to have led the way in every branch of sacred composition, in history Genesis, in legislation Leviticus, in oratorical and prophetic discourse Deuteronomy, in poetry Ex. The books of Scripture thus having each an individual character and this stamped with divine authority as an element of fitness for their particular place and function, must be regarded as organic parts of the whole. The next step in our inquiry is to classify and arrange the books themselves. Every distribution is not a true classification, as a mechanical division of an animal body is not a dissection, and every classification will not exhibit the organic structure of which we are in quest. The books of the Bible may be variously divided with respect to matters merely extraneous and contingent, and which stand in no relation to the true principle of its

construction. Then follow the writings of the prophets, that is to say, of those invested with the prophetic office. Some of these writings, the so-called former prophets--Joshua, Judges, Samuel, and Kings-- are historical; the others are prophetic, viz. Their position in this second division of the canon is due not to the nature of their contents but to the fact that their writers were prophets in the strict and official sense. Last of all those books occupy the third place which were written by inspired men who were not in the technical or official sense prophets. Thus the writings of David and Solomon, though inspired as truly as those of the prophets, are assigned to the third division of the canon, because their authors were not prophets but kings. So, too, the book of Daniel belongs in this third division, because its author, though possessing the gift of prophecy in an eminent degree, and uttering prophecies of the most remarkable character, and hence called a prophet, was not engaged in laboring with the people for their spiritual good as his contemporary and fellow-captive Ezekiel. He had an entirely different office to perform on their behalf in the distinguished position which he occupied at the court of Babylon.

Chapter 2 : Biblical criticism - Wikipedia

Moses and the Pentateuch A Popular Statement of the Theories of the So-Called Higher Criticism, Together With Some of the Reasons for Not Accepting Them by Howard Agnew Johnston The Hittites The Story of a Forgotten Empire by Archibald Henry Sayce.

Sources in the Pentateuch Dennis Bratcher The letters JEDP are a designation used by scholars to identify the component parts or sources that they understand were used to compile the first five books of the Old Testament. There have been various opinions as to whether these sources were written or oral traditions, and whether each source represents an independent strand or a stage in the development of an older source. This particular way of studying the biblical text in terms of sources used in its compilation is called source analysis or very broadly literary analysis. There is a long and interesting history of the development of this method of biblical study that dates back to Jewish scholars in the eleventh century AD see *Biblical Evidence beyond Doctrine: Dealing with the Content of Scripture*. Contrary to anti-scholarly rhetoric that is common in some church traditions even today, there was never any intent in this method to discredit any aspect of the Bible. That concern arose more as a reaction against the challenge this investigation raised concerning established ideas about Mosaic authorship that were deeply ingrained in some church tradition. That traditional view that had achieved the status of dogma in some circles, however, was not a conclusion arrived at by investigation but by acceptance of still earlier tradition. It was a view that was simply assumed apart from examining the evidence in the biblical text itself. It was not until the Reformation and the Enlightenment that systematic questions could be asked and investigated in these areas recall that Galileo tried that in the area of natural science, and was quickly silenced by the church because it was too disquieting to established views of truth! The goal of source analysis is simply to account for the features of the biblical text that emerge when the text was examined in terms of the linguistic, grammatical, and stylistic features that are common to human writing. That detailed study of the biblical text itself apart from the dogma and traditional interpretation that had been in place for centuries led to the conclusion that the material of the Pentateuch is composite, written by different people or different communities over a long period of time. There were excesses in this endeavor, however. For the first time in the church, Scripture could be investigated apart from the authority of the church in telling people what they must believe and what the text meant. Unfortunately, that led to some people focusing more on the process of investigation than what they were investigating. By the beginning of the nineteenth century, some scholars were so enamored with this method of biblical study that the number of posited sources for the Pentateuch greatly multiplied. Scholars also grew increasingly confident in their ability to identify these sources, sometimes as many as three in a single verse. This excessive zeal to dissect the biblical text into component parts led to a backlash against such methods from some circles. That reaction itself became overly zealous in the other direction, and, when combined with emerging Fundamentalism in the s, resulted in the anti-scholarly rhetoric and biases toward biblical study that still echo in the church today. The result was a gradual modification of the perspectives of source analysis, both in terms of the number of identifiable sources and the confidence in being able to identify them. Also there arose a steady recovery of a focus on the whole of the biblical text rather than a preoccupation of only its component parts. While the early formulations of JEDP may not be widely accepted today among many biblical scholars, there is little question that the Pentateuch, and the larger biblical text, is composed of diverse strands of tradition compiled over the course of many years. So, it would be helpful for students of Scripture to understand the approach of source criticism in order to gain a better appreciation not only of the biblical text, but of the development of modern biblical studies. Originally, JEDP referred to what scholars had identified as the four main sources of the Pentateuch. This referred to the conclusion that the Pentateuch as we have it had been composed or compiled from a variety of previously existing documents or sources. The letters were simply the abbreviations for those earlier documents or sources. Later source analysis of both the Pentateuch and the Gospels allowed for the possibility that some sources were not written documents but arose from oral traditions. The earliest strands of the biblical traditions, dating perhaps in written form to the time of the Davidic monarchy BC , were given the

designations J and E. It was posited that this material was written or preserved in the Southern Kingdom of Judah after the division of the Kingdom in BC, and perhaps as late as the eighth century BC. While there is some legal material in these sources, most of it is epic narrative, traditional recounting of the origins of a people and their journey through history. E was similar material that used the generic term for deity *elohim* in referring to God. It originated in the Northern Kingdom of Israel, perhaps earlier than J before the establishment of the monarchy, although most placed it around the eighth century BC. Rather than material about the Davidic monarchy, E contained the tribal traditions of the conquest of the land and the traditions about the covenant and the worship centers outside Jerusalem. D was the designation given to deuteronomic material. This was understood to be instructional or preaching material that used language, concepts, and theological perspectives very similar to that found in the Book of Deuteronomy as well as some of the prophets e. It also included much of the legal material that revolved around obedience to God as faithfulness to the Torah. There was always debate about the exact time frame of this material, but it was generally agreed that there were two distinct phases in the editing or "redaction" of D material. Some saw it as living tradition that was constantly reapplied within the community. It contained traditions from Moses, but scholars thought that an early form of Deuteronomy was in place as a written document during the reign of Josiah c. A later version of this material was reedited after the exile to apply the theology of Mosaic traditions to the crisis of the exile. The perspective of D was also thought to have influenced some of the historical traditions in Samuel-Kings and some of the prophetic traditions, especially that of Jeremiah. The P material was understood to be priestly material, and focused on the concerns of priests serving in the Jerusalem temple. This would include technical record keeping and legal traditions related to the proper functioning of the Temple and its associated activities. It included material such as detailed regulations about how to observe festivals, the counting of days, the ordering of events into sequence, genealogies and statistics, as well as reflective theological material that related to the keeping of religious law. But the final shaping of the P traditions is considered late in the development of the final form of the Pentateuch, since the priests emerged as the leaders and wielders of power only after the return from exile after BC. Therefore, most of the priestly material, in the form we have it now, is usually understood as post-exilic in the fifth century BC or later. There was always debate whether there was ever an independent P document, or whether this material was simply a rewriting of other traditional material from the perspective of priestly concerns such as the second creation account of Genesis 1. This re-writing of older material is called "redaction" editing and this led to ongoing discussion whether the "redactor" is simply a compiler of other material or is a creative author. This same discussion relates to the Gospels as well, where it is more obvious that common material from traditional sources is being used, but yet is given unique theological slants by each of the four authors. Today, while there are still challenges from some to the idea of sources in the Pentateuch, it is generally accepted even by very conservative scholars. However, there have been significant modifications from years ago and the whole scenario of "source criticism" has been vastly simplified. Rather than "sources" as specific written documents many scholars now talk about traditions, emphasizing that Scripture grew out of the ongoing life of a worshipping community rather than simply being composed by a single individual at one time and then merely edited. This has shifted an emphasis from the "authors" of Scripture to its function within the community. The sources or pre-canonical traditions of the Old Testament are now generally simplified into three. The material of J and E has now been combined into what is generally termed the JE epic narratives. This is an acknowledgement on the one hand that it is mere speculation to try to subdivide the text any further, and on the other hand that this material remains distinctive from other Pentateuchal material. Scholars have continued to acknowledge the complexity of the deuteronomic traditions within the history of the biblical communities. The debates concerning this material have centered largely on the various editions through which the D material passed, whether D was ever actual documents or more a theological point of view from which other traditions were evaluated, and the influence of the D perspective on the compilation of other traditions within the Old Testament see History and Theology in Joshua and Judges. The priestly traditions are also now seen as much more complex than a simple P designation allows. Although the final composition is still placed in the post-exilic era, most scholars now consider the P traditions to contain significant amounts of much older

material. At the least, that suggests that it is no longer adequate to deal with all priestly material as if it were a creation of the post-exilic priestly hierarchy. Of course, this would preclude Mosaic authorship of the Pentateuch as we have it now, although it would not deny that some material may have come from Moses. Examination of individual texts with sensitivity to their location within various traditions has led us to an awareness that there are obvious differences in various strata of Pentateuchal material. For example, there is a marked difference in the development of religious laws within the various traditions. The JE material allows worship of Yahweh at various outlying shrines Shiloh, Bethel, Gilgal, Shechem while the D material is insistent that sacrifices are only to be allowed at Jerusalem. Likewise, even within these traditions there is evidence of a dynamic at work within the community, as seen for example, in the various systems of tithing in Deuteronomy that traces the development from a primarily agrarian economy to an urban one. Yet, most scholars now emphasize more the whole of the canonical material and affirm that study of the component parts are not as important as how the material has been "shaped" in the formation of the canonical books that exist now. That means that source analysis is simply another tool in understanding the biblical texts. This shift to canonical and theological concerns leads to new questions in relation to the sources. The traditions are usually understood to break down in this way: The story line of the exodus in the narrative material runs through chapter 11 with Moses as the main character. This includes keeping the Passover lamb shut up for three days and outlining a seven day festival recall in the narrative, the Israelites had to leave hastily in the course of a single night, not even having time to allow the bread to rise. You are to determine the amount of lamb needed in accordance with what each person will eat. I am the LORD. No destructive plague will touch you when I strike Egypt. On the first day remove the yeast from your houses, for whoever eats anything with yeast in it from the first day through the seventh must be cut off from Israel. Do no work at all on these days, except to prepare food for everyone to eat-- that is all you may do. Celebrate this day as a lasting ordinance for the generations to come. And whoever eats anything with yeast in it must be cut off from the community of Israel, whether he is an alien or native-born. Wherever you live, you must eat unleavened bread. Not one of you shall go out the door of his house until morning. Leave my people, you and the Israelites! Go, worship the LORD as you have requested. And also bless me. There were about six hundred thousand men on foot, besides women and children. The dough was without yeast because they had been driven out of Egypt and did not have time to prepare food for themselves. There is some tension with the immediately preceding section where it states that a "mixed crowd" went up from Egypt, and the priestly regulations that no "foreigner" may eat of Passover the Israelites were the foreigners in Egypt; and they did not have slaves to worry about, they were the slaves! Do not break any of the bones. No uncircumcised male may eat of it. The consecration of the firstborn in the language and phrasing here is very similar to corresponding passages in Deuteronomy. There is also theological reflection on the events themselves and the proper response to them in light of relationship with God, and the grace the community has experienced. The first offspring of every womb among the Israelites belongs to me, whether man or animal. Eat nothing containing yeast. All the firstborn males of your livestock belong to the LORD. Redeem every firstborn among your sons. This is why I sacrifice to the LORD the first male offspring of every womb and redeem each of my firstborn sons. And the people of Israel went up out of the land of Egypt equipped for battle. This illustrates that even in what seems like a single unified passage, there may be more than one voice speaking with more than one point of concern and emphasis.

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This approach assumes a secular perspective and denies the supernatural inspiration of Scripture. Therefore, its conclusions must be in harmony with a secular, non-supernatural worldview. This automatically negates the possibility of prophecy and inspiration from God. Higher Criticism is in contrast to Lower Criticism which is the examination of the physical texts, their origin, the reliability, and the transmission. An example of higher criticism is the Documentary Hypothesis which is an attempt to explain the origin of the first five books of Moses: Genesis, Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers, and Deuteronomy. The documentary hypothesis proposes four main authors to the Pentateuch: This is also known as the Graf-Wellhausen hypothesis. This theory proposed that there are sections within the first five books that demonstrate a variety of styles and word concentrations. As an example, it asserts that there are places in the Pentateuch where the word Yahweh occurs more than Elohim. This is because one author tended to use one word or phrase more than another author and these linguistic differences demonstrate multiple authors. This methodology is not without its problems. See Answering the Documentary Hypothesis for a brief response. Higher criticism, again also known as the historical-critical method, treats the ancient texts of the Bible from an entirely secular perspective. The presupposition of secular necessity to the exclusion of supernatural possibility regarding the origin of the documents means that any texts that have a prophetic nature to them and also seem to find fulfillment in the events must have been written after the events occur. The phrase, which is little used now, came into currency from its use by W. The criticism of the biblical scriptures surged in the 18th and 19th centuries with the "two author" theory of the origin of the Pentateuch consisting of E Elohist and J Yahwist and then with the "four author" theory Documentary Hypothesis. The Christians are not limited by this strenuous requirement of secularism that is an unfounded filter put upon the Bible. The Oxford Dictionary of the Christian Church. Oxford University Press, Baker Encyclopedia of the Bible. Baker Book House,

Chapter 4 : CATHOLIC ENCYCLOPEDIA: Biblical Criticism (Higher)

"The Higher Criticism of the Pentateuch" by William Henry Green was originally written more than one hundred years ago () as a response to the "divisive hypothesis" concerning the first five books of the Bible.

The Pentateuch consists of the first five books of the OT: Although each book is a unit, together they form a larger unit and unity II. The books contain a chronological and theological progression: The origins behind the founding of the theocracy--the promised blessing of the seed in the land and of all peoples through the seed 2. The redemptions of the seed of Abraham out of bondage and the formation of this people to be a nation with a constitution a. The redemption of the people 1 Their bondage b. The formation of a people with a constitution: The reconstitution of the nation under YHWH to enter the land through a covenant renewal in legal-prophetic form C. The Pentateuch is also tied around the two-fold narrative character of narrative interspersed with blocks of legal material. La Sor et al consider this to be connected with the genre of the suzerain-vassal treaty form which combines history the historical prologue and law in the stipulations 3 III. The Pentateuch is an anonymous work 5 B. The Books do give indications of Moses as its writer: He was ordered to write historical facts Ex Moses is affirmed as author in the rest of the OT: Moses is testified to be the author of the whole Pentateuch in a unanimous way in the Talmud and the Church Fathers! Philosophically higher criticism developed out of the Rationalism of Spinoza 1. All truth must stand before the bar of reason since only reason is universal in time and common to all humanity 2. Therefore, not all of the Bible can measure up to the demands of reason. This was an attempt to identify the main documents which were sources behind the Pentateuch assuming that Moses was not the author [under reason] D. Elements employed to identify these blocks were: Duplications in material doublets and triplets 7 4. Similarity of vocabulary and style 5. Uniformity of theological outlook 6. This became known as the Graf-Wellhausen Hypothesis: The priestly document P dealings with priestly issues portions of narrative, genealogies, ritual, cult in Genesis through Numbers supposedly this comes from BC F. A major difficult with this approach is that it overlooks literary styles and techniques used in narration e. The relation between them is one of question and answer, problem and solution; the clue is Gen. Certainly Moses was not able to write about his own death at the end of Deuteronomy Deut In addition Moses was obviously not an eyewitness to the Genesis events. No doubt these were preserved through oral tradition until the time of the Exodus when finally Moses put them down in writing. That it was personal, biographical, anthropomorphic, included prophetic-like ethics and theological reflection. There also was a source considered to be JE which an unknown redactor combined. See the appendix to Deuteronomy for a fuller discussion of this. I would add, however, that a movement toward canonical interpretation does not necessarily need to be at the expense of historical, critical studies.

The Higher Criticism of the Pentateuch [William Green] is 20% off every day at www.nxgvision.com In the author's words this historic volume was written "to show, as briefly and compactly as possible, that the faith of all past ages in.

Source criticism Source criticism is the search for the original sources which lie behind a given biblical text. Form criticism Form criticism breaks the Bible down into sections pericopes, stories , which are analyzed and categorized by genres prose or verse, letters, laws, court archives, war hymns, poems of lament etc. The belief in the priority, stability and even detectability, of oral traditions is now recognised to be so deeply questionable as to render tradition history largely useless, but form criticism itself continues to develop as a viable methodology in biblical studies. Redaction criticism Redaction criticism studies "the collection, arrangement, editing and modification of sources" and is frequently used to reconstruct the community and purposes of the authors of the text. After the groundbreaking work on the New Testament by Friedrich Schleiermacher " , the next generation, which included scholars such as David Friedrich Strauss "74 and Ludwig Feuerbach "72 , analyzed in the mid 19th century the historical records of the Middle East from biblical times, in search of independent confirmation of events in the Bible. Hegel " and the French rationalists. Two of the authors were indicted for heresy and lost their jobs by , but in , they had the judgement overturned on appeal. Some scholars, such as Rudolf Bultmann " have used higher criticism of the Bible to " demythologize " it. John Barton argues that the term "historical-critical method" conflates two nonidentical distinctions, and prefers the term "Biblical criticism": This suggests that the term "historical-critical method" is an awkward hybrid and might better be avoided. From these two principles the Modernists deduce two laws, which, when united with a third which they have already got from agnosticism, constitute the foundation of historical criticism. We will take an illustration from the Person of Christ. In the person of Christ, they say, science and history encounter nothing that is not human. Therefore, in virtue of the first canon deduced from agnosticism, whatever there is in His history suggestive of the divine, must be rejected. Then, according to the second canon, the historical Person of Christ was transfigured by faith; therefore everything that raises it above historical conditions must be removed. Lately, the third canon, which lays down that the person of Christ has been disfigured by faith, requires that everything should be excluded, deeds and words and all else that is not in keeping with His character, circumstances and education, and with the place and time in which He lived. A strange style of reasoning, truly; but it is Modernist criticism. Who is the author of this history? Assuredly, neither of these but the philosopher. From beginning to end everything in it is a priori.

Chapter 6 : Chapter 1 - The History of the Higher Criticism - The Fundamentals

PREFACE THE Higher Criticism has been of late so associated with extravagant theorizing, and with insidious attacks upon the genuineness and credibility of the books of the.

Overview Biblical criticism in its fullest comprehension is the examination of the literary origins and historical values of the books composing the Bible , with the state in which these exist at the present day. Since the sacred Scriptures have come down in a great variety of copies and ancient versions, showing more or less divergence of text, it is the province of that department of Biblical criticism which is called textual , or lower, to study these documents with a view to arriving at the purest possible text of the sacred books. The name higher criticism was first employed by the German Biblical scholar Eichhorn, in the second edition of his "Einleitung", appearing in It is not, as supposed by some, an arrogant denomination, assuming superior wisdom, but it has come into use because this sort of criticism deals with the larger aspects of Bible study; viz. In reaching its results it sets more store on evidences internal to the books than on external traditions or attestations, and its undeniable effect is to depreciate tradition in a great measure, so that there exists a sharply-drawn line between the exegetes of the critical and those of the traditional school. In the process by which the critics arrive at their conclusions there is a divergence of attitude towards the supernatural element in Holy Writ. Those of the rationalistic wing ignore, and at least tacitly deny, inspiration in the theological meaning of the term, and without any doctrinal preoccupations, except some hostile to the supernatural , proceed to apply critical tests to the Scriptures, in the same manner as if they were merely human productions. Catholic Biblical critics, while taking as postulates the plenary inspiration and the inerrancy of the sacred Writings, admit in a large measure the literary and historical conclusions reached by non-Catholic workers in this field, and maintain that these are not excluded by Catholic faith. Its Christian exponents insist that a reverent criticism is quite within its rights in sifting the elements which enter into human aspects of the Bible , as a means of a better understanding of the written word, since its component parts were given their form by men in certain historical environments and under some of the limitations of their age and place, and since, moreover, inspiration does not dispense with ordinary human industry and methods in literary composition. Higher Criticism may be called a science , though its processes and results do not admit of nicety of control and demonstration, as its principles are of the moral-psychological order. Hence its conclusions, even in the most favourable circumstances, attain to no greater force than what arises from a convergence of probabilities, begetting a moral conviction. While some attempts have been made to elaborate a system of canons for the higher criticism, it has not, and probably never will have, a strictly defined and generally accepted code of principles and rules. Some broad principles, however, are universally admitted by critical scholars. A fundamental one is that a literary work always betrays the imprint of the age and environment in which it was produced; another is that a plurality of authors is proved by well-marked differences of diction and style, at least when these coincide with distinctions in view-point or discrepancies in a double treatment of the same subject. A third received canon holds to a radical dissimilarity between ancient Semitic and modern Occidental, or Aryan, methods of composition. History before the eighteenth century The early ecclesiastical writers were unconscious of nearly all the problems to which criticism has given rise. Their attention was concentrated on the Divine content and authority of sacred Scripture, and, looking almost exclusively at the Divine side, they deemed as of trifling account questions of authorship, date, composition, accepting unreservedly for these points such traditions as the Jewish Church had handed down, all the more readily that Christ Himself seemed to have given various of these traditions His supreme confirmation. As for the New Testament , tradition was the determining factor here too. As exceptions we may note that Origen concluded partly from internal evidence that St. Paul could scarcely have written the Epistle to the Hebrews, and his disciple Dionysius adduced linguistic grounds for rejecting the Apocalypse as a work of St. The Fathers saw in every sentence of the Scripture a pregnant oracle of God. Apparent contradictions and other difficulties were solved without taking possible human imperfection into view. Only in a few isolated passages does St. Jerome seem to hint at such in connexion with history. Except in regard to the preservation of the sacred text there was

nothing to elicit a critical view of the Bible in the age of the Fathers, and this applies also to the Scholastic period. Even the Humanist movement preceding the Reformation gave no impulse to the critical spirit beyond fostering the study of the Scriptures in their original languages. It was not a Humanist, but the erratic Reformer Carlstadt, who first broke with tradition on the authorship of an inspired book by declaring that Moses could not have written the Pentateuch, because the account of his death is in the same style as the rest of his book. But though Carlstadt adduced a critical argument he cannot be styled a critic. Hobbes, Pereyre, Spinoza attacked the Mosaic authorship, but merely incidentally, in works in which anything like a systematic criticism found no place. A French priest, Richard Simon, was the first who subjected the general questions concerning the Bible to a treatment which was at once comprehensive in scope and scientific in method. Simon is the forerunner of modern Biblical criticism. In this he called attention to the double narratives and variation of style in the Pentateuch, and thence deduced that, aside from the legal portion, which Moses himself had written down, much of the remaining matter was the work of several inspired annalists, a class to whom are due the later historical books, and who in subsequent generations added touches to the inspired histories by their predecessors. This theory did not survive its author, but the use of internal evidence by which Simon arrived at it entitles him to be called the father of Biblical criticism. His novel view of the Mosaic books excited only condemnation, and his critical work, being an isolated effort which did not win the support of a school, found appreciation only in recent times. A continuously developing higher criticism was not to begin till the middle of the eighteenth century. But a capital distinction is to be made between criticism as applied to the Old and as applied to the New Testament. The two have followed different courses. Philosophico-religious prejudices have been kept in the background. The idea attracted little attention till it was taken up by a German scholar, who, however, claims to have made the discovery independently. But the German savant was not so orthodox an adherent of the Mosaic authorship as was Astruc, since he left to the Hebrew legislator a very uncertain part of the work. When Eichhorn composed his "Introduction" he was somewhat influenced by free-thinking views which later became very pronounced. This was in part native to the soil, but it drew much nurture from the ideas of the English Deists and Sceptics, who flourished towards the end of the seventeenth century and in the first part of the eighteenth. Such authors as Blount and Collins had impugned miracles and prophecy and in general the authority of the O. Lessing, his literary executor, without departing so offensively from the path of orthodoxy, defended the fullest freedom of discussion in theological matters. Contemporary with Lessing was J. Semler, who rejected inspiration, attributed a mythical character to episodes in O. Eichhorn is the first typical representative of modern Biblical criticism, the especial home of which has been Germany. He gave the first impulse to the literary analysis of the Scriptures, applying it not only to the Pentateuch, but also to Isaias and other portions of the O. Outside of Germany the views of Eichhorn and his school found little currency. This was the well-known "Fragment" hypothesis, which reduced the Pentateuch to a collection of fragmentary sections partly of Mosaic origin, but put together in the reign of Solomon. For the fuller account of this and later stages of the criticism of the Pentateuch the reader is referred to the article under that heading. With some essays of a young scholar, De Wette, which were published, properly began the historical criticism of the Bible. De Wette joined to the evidences supplied by vocabulary and style. He was the first to attack the historical character of the books of Paralipomenon, or Chronicles. Bleek, Ewald, and the Catholic Movers, while following critical methods, opposed the purely negative criticism of De Wette and his school, and sought to save the authenticity of some Mosaic books and Davidic psalms by sacrificing that of others. Bleek revived, and brought into prominence, the conclusion of Geddes, that the book of Josue is in close literary connexion with the first five books of the Bible, and thenceforth the idea of a Hexateuch, or sixfold work, has been maintained by advanced exegetes. Hupfeld, in, found four instead of three documents in the Pentateuch, viz. He allowed to none of these a Mosaic origin. These, while refusing to allow the testimony of Jewish tradition to be ruled out of court as invalid against internal evidence, were compelled to employ the methods of their adversaries in defending the time-honoured views. The questions were agitated only in countries where Protestantism predominated, and, among these, in England the conservative views were strongly entrenched. The critical dissection of books was and is accomplished on the ground of diversity of vocabulary and style, the phenomena of double narratives of the

same event varying from each other, it is claimed, to the extent of discrepancy, and differences of religious conceptions. The critics appeal for confirmation of this literary analysis to the historical books. These and like tests are applied to nearly every book of the O. The Hegelian principle of evolution has undoubtedly influenced German criticism, and indirectly Biblical criticism in general. Applied to religion, it has powerfully helped to beget a tendency to regard the religion of Israel as evolved by processes not transcending nature, from a polytheistic worship of the elements to a spiritual and ethical monotheism. This theory was first elaborated by Abram Kuenen, a Dutch theologian, in his "Religion of Israel" Without being essential to, it harmonizes with the current system of Pentateuchal criticism, sometimes called "the Development Hypothesis", but better known as "the Grafian". This hypothesis is accepted today by the great body of non-Catholic Biblical scholarship. It makes the Pentateuch a growth formed by the piecing and interlacing together of documents representing distinct epochs. Of these the oldest is the Jehovistic, or J, dating from the ninth century B. These elements are prophetic in spirit and narrative in matter. D, the Deuteronomic Code, was the organ and instrument of the prophetic reform under Josias; it appeared B. P, the great document containing the Priestly Code, was drawn up after the Babylonian Exile, and is the outcome of the sacerdotal and ritual formalism distinguishing the restored Jewish community; it therefore dates from the fifth century B. This ingenious and coherent hypothesis was formulated first by E. Reuss of the University of Strasburg, but presented to the public many years later by his disciple H. The shifting of the Priestly Code formerly called the First Elohist from the earliest to the latest in time, a characteristic of the Grafian system, has had a marked influence on the drift of O. It has reversed the chronological order of the prophetic and priestly elements running through the greater part of the O. Only within the last two decades has higher criticism made notable progress in English-speaking lands, and this has been rendered possible by the moderation of its leading spokesman there. Foremost among these semi-orthodox critics of the O. Robertson Smith in "The Old Testament and the Jewish Church" had previously, though less systematically, presented the Grafian hypothesis to the English-speaking world. In America most of the conclusions of German criticism have found advocates in Professors C. The higher criticism claims to have discerned great inequalities in the value of those portions of the O. In the same book we may find, it asserts, myth, legend, and material of real historical worth, the last of these elements being abundant in Judges and the Books of Kings, though even here a careful sifting must be used. In parts of the Hexateuch, especially in the priestly document and the cognate Paralipomenon writing, history is freely idealized, and existing institutions are projected artificially into the remote past. The Psalms have few if any compositions by David; they are the religious poetry of Israel. Isaias is a composite, containing messages of prophets widely separated in time and circumstances. The prophets spoke and wrote primarily in view of definite contemporary situations. Job is an epic, and Canticles a pastoral drama. The book of Daniel is an apocalypse of the Machabean period, describing history of the past and present under the semblance of visions of the future. To conclude this outline of the critical results, the human element in Scripture is given prominence and represented as clothed with the imperfections, limitations, and errors of the times of its origin; many books are exhibited as the products of successive literary accretions, excluding any unity of authorship; in fact, for most of the histories, the unknown writers retire into the shadow to give place to the unifying labours of the equally unknown "redactor" or "redactors". The reaction against criticism This has been aided by the antithesis between the conclusions of certain Assyriologists of note viz. Hommel and the prevailing school of criticism. Recent discoveries in Egypt, Mesopotamia, and Persia prove that a developed civilization existed in Western Asia in times contemporary with Abraham, and earlier. They charge the critics with not taking Oriental discoveries sufficiently into account, and argue that, since the monuments confirm the substantial truth of some of the historical books, a presumption is raised in favour of the veracity of Hebrew literature in general. The historical character of the narratives is upheld by other considerations of a more minute and technical nature. In America the old views of the Bible were defended with zeal and learning by Dr. Green, of Princeton, author of a series of Biblical works extending from to; also by E. In Germany, J. Keil, who died in, was the last exegete of international name who stood without compromise for tradition.

Chapter 7 : The Higher Criticism of the Pentateuch by William Henry Green

The Higher Criticism of the Pentateuch has 0 ratings and 0 reviews. This work has been selected by scholars as being culturally important, and is part of.

What is the meaning of the Higher Criticism? Why is it called higher? It is not used in the popular sense of the word at all, and may convey a wrong impression to the ordinary man. Nor is it meant to convey the idea of superiority. It is simply a term of contrast. In the early stages of the science Biblical criticism was devoted to two great branches, the Lower, and the Higher. The Lower Criticism was employed to designate the study of the text of the Scripture, and included the investigation of the manuscripts, and the different readings in the various versions and codices and manuscripts in order that we may be sure we have the original words as they were written by the Divinely inspired writers. The term generally used now-a-days is Textual Criticism. But the term is not now-a-days used as a rule. The Higher Criticism, on the contrary, was employed to designate the study of the historic origins, the dates, and authorship of the various books of the Bible, and that great branch of study which in the technical language of modern theology is known as Introduction. It is a very valuable branch of Biblical science, and is of the highest importance as an auxiliary in the interpretation of the Word of God. By its researches floods of light may be thrown on the Scriptures. The term Higher Criticism, then, means nothing more than the study of the literary structure of the various books of the Bible, and more especially of the Old Testament. Now this in itself is most laudable. How is it, then, that the Higher Criticism has become identified in the popular mind with attacks upon the Bible and the supernatural character of the Holy Scriptures? The reason is this. No study perhaps requires so devout a spirit and so exalted a faith in the supernatural as the pursuit of the Higher Criticism. It demands at once the ability of the scholar, and the simplicity of the believing child of God. For without faith no one can explain the Holy Scriptures, and without scholarship no one can investigate historic origins. There is a Higher Criticism that is at once reverent in tone and scholarly in work. Hengstenberg, the German, and Horne, the Englishman, may be taken as examples. It is a work that is simply massive in its scholarship, and invaluable in its vast reach of information for the study of the Holy Scriptures. It is too cumbrous for use in this hurrying age. Latterly, however, it has been edited by Dr. Samuel Davidson, who practically adopted the views of Hupfield and Halle and interpolated not a few of the modern German theories. But the work of the Higher Critic has not always been pursued in a reverent spirit nor in the spirit of scientific and Christian scholarship. Everybody knows that style is a very unsafe basis for the determination of a literary product. The greater the writer the more versatile his power of expression; and anybody can understand that the Bible is the last book in the world to be studied as a mere classic by mere human scholarship without any regard to the spirit of sympathy and reverence on the part of the student. The Bible, as has been said, has no revelation to make to unbiblical minds. It does not even follow that because a man is a philological expert he is able to understand the integrity or credibility of a passage of Holy Scripture any more than the beauty and spirit of it. The qualification for the perception of Biblical truth is neither philosophic nor philological knowledge, but spiritual insight. The primary qualification of the musician is that he be musical; of the artist, that he have the spirit of art. So the merely technical and mechanical and scientific mind is disqualified for the recognition of the spiritual and infinite. Any thoughtful man must honestly admit that the Bible is to be treated as unique in literature, and, therefore, that the ordinary rules of critical interpretation must fail to interpret it aright. For hypothesis-weaving and speculation, the German theological professor is unsurpassed. I do not frame hypotheses. It is notorious that some of the most learned German thinkers are men who lack in a singular degree the faculty of common sense and knowledge of human nature. Like many physical scientists, they are so preoccupied with a theory that their conclusions seem to the average mind curiously warped. In fact, a learned man in a letter to Descartes once made an observation which, with slight verbal alteration, might be applied to some of the German critics: That is, they may describe chimeras which correspond to the fatuity of their own minds, but without an understanding truly Divine they can never form such an idea to themselves as the Deity had in creating it. It deals with the writers and readers of the ancient Orient as if they were modern German professors, and the attempt to transform the ancient Israelites

into somewhat inferior German compilers, proves a strange want of familiarity with Oriental modes of thought. This is not an ex-parte statement at all. It is simply a matter of fact, as we shall presently show. Some of the men who have been most distinguished as the leaders of the Higher Critical movement in Germany and Holland have been men who have no faith in the God of the Bible, and no faith in either the necessity or the possibility of a personal supernatural revelation. The men who have been the voices of the movement, of whom the great majority, less widely known and less influential, have been mere echoes; the men who manufactured the articles the others distributed, have been notoriously opposed to the miraculous. We must not be misunderstood. We distinctly repudiate the idea that all the Higher Critics were or are anti-supernaturalists. The British-American School embraces within its ranks many earnest believers. What we do say, as we will presently show, is that the dominant minds which have led and swayed the movement, who made the theories that the others circulated, were strongly unbelieving. Then the higher critical movement has not followed its true and original purposes in investigating the Scriptures for the purposes of confirming faith and of helping believers to understand the beauties, and appreciate the circumstances of the origin of the various books, and so understand more completely the Bible? It has not; unquestionably it has not. It has been deflected from that, largely owing to the character of the men whose ability and forcefulness have given predominance to their views. It has become identified with a system of criticism which is based on hypotheses and suppositions which have for their object the repudiation of the traditional theory, and has investigated the origins and forms and styles and contents, apparently not to confirm the authenticity and credibility and reliability of the Scriptures, but to discredit in most cases their genuineness, to discover discrepancies, and throw doubt upon their authority. We will answer this as briefly as possible. It is not easy to say who is the first so-called Higher Critic, or when the movement began. But it is not modern by any means. Broadly speaking, it has passed through three great stages: The views which are now accepted as axiomatic by the Continental and British-American schools of Higher Criticism seem to have been first hinted at by Carlstadt in his work on the Canon of Scripture, and by Andreas Masius, a Belgian scholar, who published a commentary on Joshua in 1629, and a Roman Catholic priest, called Peyrere or Pererius, in his Systematic Theology, 1657. But it may really be said to have originated with Spinoza, the rationalist Dutch philosopher. In his Tractatus Theologico-Politicus Cap. Spinoza was really the fountain-head of the movement, and his line was taken in England by the British philosopher Hobbes. He went deeper than Spinoza, as an outspoken antagonist of the necessity and possibility of a personal revelation, and also denied the Mosaic authorship of the Pentateuch. Clericus is said to have been the first critic who set forth the theory that Christ and his Apostles did not come into the world to teach the Jews criticism, and that it is only to be expected that their language would be in accordance with the views of the day. In a Frenchman named Astruc, a medical man, and reputedly a free-thinker of profligate life, propounded for the first time the Jehovistic and Elohistive divisive hypothesis, and opened a new era. Astruc said that the use of the two names, Jehovah and Elohim, shewed the book was composed of different documents. The idea of the Holy Ghost employing two words, or one here and another there, or both together as He wills, never seems to enter the thought of the Higher Critic! Astruc may be called the father of the documentary theories. He asserted there are traces of no less than ten or twelve different memoirs in the book of Genesis. He denied its Divine authority, and considered the book to be disfigured by useless repetitions, disorder, and contradiction. The rationalism of Germany was as yet undeveloped, so that the body was not yet prepared to receive the germ, or the soil the weed. Eichhorn is the greatest name in this period, the eminent Oriental professor at Gottingen who published his work on the Old Testament introduction in 1783. He put into different shape the documentary hypothesis of the Frenchman, and did his work so ably that his views were generally adopted by the most distinguished scholars. Few scholars refused to do honor to the new sun. It is through him that the name Higher Criticism has become identified with the movement. He was followed by Vater and later by Hartmann with their fragment theory which practically undermined the Mosaic authorship, made the Pentateuch a heap of fragments, carelessly joined by one editor, and paved the way for the most radical of all divisive hypotheses. In De Wette, Professor of Philosophy and Theology at Heidelberg, published a work which ran through six editions in four decades. His contribution to the introduction of the Old Testament instilled the same general principles as Eichhorn, and in

the supplemental hypotheses assumed that Deuteronomy was composed in the age of Josiah 2 Kings Not long after, Vatke and Leopold George both Hegelians unreservedly declared the post-Mosaic and post-prophetic origin of the first four books of the Bible. Graf was a pupil of Reuss, the redactor of the Ezra hypothesis of Spinoza. Kuenen was one of the most advanced exponents of the rationalistic school. Last, but not least, of the continental Higher Critics is Julius Wellhausen, who at one time was a theological professor in Germany, who published in the first volume of his history of Israel, and won by his scholarship the attention if not the allegiance of a number of leading theologians. See Higher Criticism of the Pentateuch, Green, pages It will be observed that nearly all these authors were Germans, and most of them professors of philosophy or theology. The best known names are those of Dr. The supplementary hypothesis passed over into England through him and with strange incongruity, he borrowed frequently from Baur. Robertson Smith, the Scotchman, recast the German theories in an English form in his works on the Pentateuch, the Prophets of Israel, and the Old Testament in the Jewish Church, first published in , and followed the German school, according to Briggs, with great boldness and thoroughness. Another well-known Higher Critic is Dr. The hand is the hand of Driver, but the voice is the voice of Kuenen or Wellhausen. The third well-known name is that of Dr. We must now investigate another question, and that is the religious views of the men most influential in this movement. In making the statement that we are about to make, we desire to deprecate entirely the idea of there being anything uncharitable, unfair, or unkind, in stating what is simply a matter of fact. They were men who denied the validity of miracle, and the validity of any miraculous narrative. What Christians have been accustomed to consider prophetic, they called dexterous conjectures, coincidences, fiction, or imposture. They were men who denied the reality of revelation, in the sense in which it has ever been held by the universal Christian Church. They were avowed unbelievers of the supernatural. Their theories were excogitated on pure grounds of human reasoning. Their hypotheses were constructed on the assumption of the falsity of Scripture. As to the inspiration of the Bible, as to the Holy Scriptures from Genesis to Revelation being the Word of God, they had no such belief. We may take them one by one. Spinoza repudiated absolutely a supernatural revelation.

Chapter 8 : Higher Criticism of the Pentateuch: Green

(Briggs' Higher Criticism of the Pentateuch, page 46). Astruc said that the use of the two names, Jehovah and Elohim, shewed the book was composed of different documents. (The idea of the Holy Ghost employing two words, or one here and another there, or both together as He wills, never seems to enter the thought of the Higher Critic!).

Philosophers and theologians such as Thomas Hobbes , Benedict Spinoza , and Richard Simon questioned Mosaic authorship. Spinoza said Moses could not have written the preface to Deuteronomy, since he never crossed the Jordan; he points out that Deuteronomy There was a willingness among the doctoral candidates to re-express Christian doctrine in terms of the scientific method and the historical understanding common during the German Enlightenment circa Turretin believed the Bible could be considered authoritative even if it was not considered inerrant. This has become a common modern Judeo-Christian view. As a result, Semler is often called the father of historical-critical research. This is a concept recognized by modern psychology. Herrick says even though most scholars agree that biblical criticism evolved out of the German Enlightenment, there are also histories of biblical scholarship that have found "strong direct links" with British deism. Herrick references the theologian Henning Graf Reventlow as saying deism included the humanist world view , which has also been significant in biblical criticism. Camerarius advocated for using context to interpret Bible texts. Grotius paved the way for comparative religion studies by analyzing New Testament texts in light of Classical, Jewish and early Christian writings. Tindal, as part of English deism, asserted that Jesus taught natural religion , an undogmatic faith that was later changed by the Church. The first scholar to separate the historical Jesus from the theological Jesus was philosopher, writer, classicist, Hebraist and Enlightenment free thinker Hermann Samuel Reimarus Reimarus had left permission for his work to be published after his death, and Lessing did so between and , publishing them as *Die Fragmente eines unbekanntes Autors* The Fragments of an Unknown Author. Reimarus distinguished between what Jesus taught and how he is portrayed in the New Testament. According to Reimarus, Jesus was a political Messiah who failed at creating political change and was executed. His disciples then stole the body and invented the story of the resurrection for personal gain. Reimarus had shown biblical criticism could serve its own ends, be governed solely by rational criteria, and reject deference to religious tradition. This has since become an accepted concept. They used the concept of myth as a tool for interpreting the Bible. This concept was later picked up by Rudolf Bultmann and it became particularly influential in the early twentieth century. For example, in and again in , theologian Ferdinand Christian Baur postulated a sharp contrast between the apostles Peter and Paul. Since then, this concept has had widespread debate within topics such as Pauline and New Testament studies, early church studies, Jewish Law, the theology of grace, and the doctrine of justification. He saw Christianity as something new and universal that supersedes all that came before it. Holtzmann developed a listing of the chronological order of the New Testament. He also critiqued the romanticized "lives of Jesus" as built on dubious assumptions reflecting more of the life of the author than Jesus. His pioneering studies in biblical criticism shaped research on the composition of the gospels, and his call for demythologizing biblical language sparked debate among Christian theologians worldwide. It is not the elimination of myth but is, instead, its re-expression in terms of the existential philosophy of Martin Heidegger. While form criticism divided the text into small units, redaction emphasized the literary integrity of the larger literary units. The rise of redaction criticism closed it by bringing about a greater emphasis on diversity. New historicism , a literary theory that views history through literature, also developed. Sanders advanced the New Perspective on Paul , which has greatly influenced scholarly views on the relationship between Pauline Christianity and Jewish Christianity in the Pauline epistles. These new points of view created awareness that the Bible can be rationally interpreted from many different perspectives. Law writes that textual, source, form, and redaction criticism are employed together by biblical scholars. The Old Testament the Hebrew Bible and the New Testament are distinct bodies of literature that raise their own problems of interpretation. Therefore, separating these methods, and addressing the Bible as a whole, is an artificial approach that is necessary only for the purpose of description.

Chapter 9 : The Higher Criticism of the Mosaic authorship of the Pentateuch

An example of higher criticism is the Documentary Hypothesis which is an attempt to explain the origin of the first five books of Moses: Genesis, Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers, and Deuteronomy. The documentary hypothesis proposes four main authors to the Pentateuch: J (Yahwist), E (Elohist), P (Priestly), and D (Deuteronomic).

Early modern biblical studies were customarily divided into two branches. The other genre was called "higher" criticism, which, as Benjamin Jowett of Oxford University once said, sought to investigate and interpret biblical documents like any other document of antiquity. Inevitably, the same intellectual energies that fueled the burgeoning historical studies in nineteenth-century Germany and England were applied to the biblical studies as well. By the mid-nineteenth century the term "higher criticism" was employed to describe the application of the historical-critical method derived from other historical disciplines to the Bible and its many authors. These newer biblical studies were also influenced by prevailing Enlightenment presuppositions, especially those espoused by Kant and Hegel. For these reasons, higher criticism came to be viewed as a radical departure from earlier biblical studies in the precritical eras. In established Catholic, Protestant, and Jewish religious communities, the term came to be associated with the desacralizing of the Bible. Scholars in academic circles, however, employed the newer critical methods while trying to free biblical studies from the heavy hand of theological conviction. By the s American Protestant scholars in Cambridge, Andover, and Princeton were well aware of the German higher critics. At Princeton Theological Seminary, a young Charles Hodge returned from studies in Germany and mounted a countermovement to higher criticism through his journal, *The Biblical Repertory and Princeton Review*. Other religious communities, such as Protestant theologians in the South, conservative Jewish scholars, and traditional Roman Catholic academics, usually responded to the higher critics with suspicion and distaste. By the late nineteenth century, increasing numbers of English-speaking scholars viewed the newer critical methods as promising, responsible, and liberating. In sharp and deepening opposition, conservative Roman Catholic, Protestant, and Jewish scholars wrote feverishly to counter the growing consensus of higher critics. By the end of the nineteenth century two responses to higher criticism seemed inescapable: Both of these positions came to poignant focus when the Presbyterian professor Charles A. Briggs of Union Theological Seminary was tried for heresy for his more modernist views about the Bible in 1876. By the opening decade of the twentieth century the term "higher criticism" was deemed too simplistic and amorphous. By then biblical scholars from divergent religious traditions and university doctoral studies were eager to broker the hermeneutical insights adapted from a wider and more secular scholarship in the fields of history, literary criticism, modern philosophy, and science. *The Rise of Biblical Criticism in America*, University of Connecticut Press, *A Dictionary of Biblical Interpretation*. American Catholic Biblical Scholarship. Harper and Row, *Dictionary of Biblical Interpretation*. Sarna, Jonathan, and N. Edited by Ernest S.