

PART ONE:

GENERAL INTRODUCTION

I. THE BIBLE: WHAT IT IS

To introduce this study, a few facts about the Bible are essential. Although we are concerned here only with the first book of the Bible, the book of Genesis, we must keep in mind that the importance of this one book is to be measured in terms of the relation of its content to that of the Bible as a whole. A few of the more important facts about the Bible that we need to know are the following:

1. It has been rightly said that *the Bible is a library of books*. It is from almost every point of view the greatest collection of books available to man, sixty-six books in all, thirty-nine in the part known as the Old Testament, twenty-seven in the part known as the New Testament. Hence the derivation of our English word "Bible" from the Greek neuter plural, *biblia* (which derived in turn from *byblos* and *biblos*, the Greek word which designated the papyrus reed from strips of which "books" were made in ancient times, usually in the form of "rolls"). In these various books of the Bible we find law, history, narrative, poetry, prophecy, letters, proverbs, parables, apocalypses, in fact examples of almost every literary form known to man.

2. *The Bible is a library of related books*. Despite the fact that the sixty-six books which go to make up The Book were written by many different authors, over a period extending from about 1500 B.C. to about A.D. 100, most of whom were unknown to one another, the amazing fact is that the completed whole is a *single* story with a *single* theme, namely, redemption through Christ Jesus. As Augustine once put it:

In the Old Testament is the New Testament concealed;

In the New Testament is the Old Testament revealed.

Everything in the Old Testament pointed forward to Messiah (*Christos, Christ*, "The Anointed One" of God);

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everything in the New Testament points back to Him. The Central Figure of all human history is the Central Figure of the Bible.

3. *The Bible is a collection of selected books.*

(1) These books did not just "get together" in some mysterious manner without rhyme or reason. The inclusion of the various sixty-six books in the Canon was determined first by popular acceptance and use, and then by Christian scholarship directed to the specific problem of a final determination of the Canon. The essential criterion for this determination was the contribution made by each book to the history of redemption as worked out on earth in the Messianic Line—the genealogy that began with the "first Adam" and terminated with the "second Adam," the Lord Jesus Christ (1 Cor. 15:45-49).

(2) The Apocrypha (those books of "doubtful" authenticity) were present in the Greek version of the Old Testament known as the Septuagint, the version used in Alexandria and in other cities of the Hellenistic world at the time of Christ. However, these books were never in the Hebrew Old Testament. Jerome included only two of them in his Latin translation, the Vulgate, made about A.D. 405; they were included in the Vulgate later, however, and hence they are still in Roman Catholic Versions. These books were included in the King James Version also, but the Puritans objected so strongly to the questionable moral standards indicated in some of them, that they came to be left out of many—but not all—Protestant Bibles. As a matter of fact, the contents of the Apocrypha have to do largely with inter-testamental history, wisdom books, traditions, etc., and contribute little or nothing to the development of the grand theme of divine revelation, the theme of human redemption as mediated by the ministry and work of the Messiah.

(3) In addition to these apocryphal books, there were many "books," that is, "gospels," "epistles," etc., in circu-

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lation in the post-apostolic age, which are known as the Pseudepigrapha ("false writings"), so-called because they laid claim to authorship by churchmen distinguished in the early ages of Christianity. The fact of the matter is that the literary and doctrinal excellence of the canonical books above those of the Apocrypha and the Pseudepigrapha becomes so obvious by comparison, as to definitely establish the Canon and hence to distinguish the canonical from the non-canonical writings.

4. *The Bible presents itself to us as the Book of the Spirit of God.* It purports to be the record of a progressive revelation (cf. Isa. 28:10, Mark 4:28) of God's will toward man, as authorized, communicated, and protected against error, by the direct agency of the Spirit of God. This revelation took place first in history: in the lives of the patriarchs, in the establishment and guidance of the Hebrew theocracy under Moses and Joshua, in the chaotic period of the "Judges" (divinely called civil and military dictators), in the lives and ministries of the Hebrew prophets, in the life and preparatory work of John the Baptizer, and finally in the lives and ministries of Jesus and His Spirit-guided Apostles. This revelation took place on the stage of human history; the record of that revelation—line upon line, precept upon precept—and its meaning for mankind, is preserved for us by the agency of the Holy Spirit in this, The Book of books, the Bible. The whole is truly the book of the Spirit. In the first chapter of Genesis we are told of the Spirit's brooding over the darkness of non-being ("the deep") and arousing therein motion, energy, light, matter; and in the last chapter of the Bible, we hear the Spirit joining in the Gospel invitation, "The Spirit and the bride say, Come. And he that heareth, let him say, Come. And he that is athirst, let him come; he that will, let him take of the water of life freely" (Rev. 22:17). And the *imprimatur* of the Spirit is obvious on every book, indeed on every page, that lies between these first and last chapters.

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Holy men of old spoke as they were moved by the Holy Spirit (2 Pet. 1:21). The great Hebrew prophets sought diligently the meaning of the testimonies which the Spirit of Christ communicated through them, testimonies concerning the sufferings of Christ and the glories that should follow them (1 Pet. 1:10-12), the testimonies later embodied in the Gospel message at first proclaimed by the Apostles and their co-laborers, by inspiration of the same Holy Spirit sent forth from heaven. Jesus, who possessed the Holy Spirit without measure (John 3:34) taught and wrought by the power of the Spirit (Luke 11:20, Matt. 12:28, Luke 4:4, 14, 18-19; Isa. 61:1-3). And the Apostles were guided into all the truth by the agency of the same Spirit in executing the Last Will and Testament of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ (Luke 24:45-49; John 14:16-17, 14:26, 15:26-27, 16:7-15, 20:21-22; Acts 1:1-5, 2:1-4; Acts 15:28; 1 Cor. 2:6-15). With the termination of the apostolic ministry, revelation—and along with it, demonstration (miracles)—came to an end (1 Cor. 13:8, Jude 3): all things that pertain “unto life and godliness” were revealed (2 Pet. 1:3, 2 Tim. 3:16-17). Before critics, motivated as they usually are by their own wishful thinking, project their destructive speculations in regard to the text of the Bible, they must come to grips with this doctrine of the Spirit. *It is the inspiration of the Spirit that is the source of the Bible's unity and the guarantee of its reliability.*

5. *Even though the Bible is a library of books, it is still one Book, the Book of all books, the Book that has been translated, either in part or as a whole, into more languages (some 1100) than any other book known to man. We err when we think of the Bible as the source of two or three different religions. It is, rather, the record of the progressive revelation of the one true religion as it was actualized by the Spirit through three successive Dispensations. (The word “dispensation” has reference to the system by which*

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God dispenses His gifts and graces throughout any particular period or age: cf. Eph. 1:10, 3:2.) The Dispensations changed—from the family to the national to the universal—as the type of priesthood changed. The Patriarchal Dispensation was the age of family rule and family worship, with the patriarch (paternal head) acting as prophet (revealer of God's will), priest (intercessor), and king for his entire progeny. (*The book of Genesis gives us the history of the Patriarchal Dispensation.*) The Jewish Dispensation was ushered in with the establishment of a national institution of worship (first the Tabernacle, and later the Temple) and a national priesthood (the Levitical or Aaronic priesthood). The Christian Dispensation had its beginning with the abrogation of the Old Covenant and the ratification of the New Covenant by one and the same event—the death of Christ on the Cross (although the Jewish Institution was permitted to remain as a social and civil institution some forty years longer, that is, down to the destruction of Jerusalem and the dispersion of its people by the Roman armies, A.D. 70). (Cf. John 1:17, Gal. 3:23-29, 2 Cor. 3:1-11, Col. 2:13-15; and especially the seventh, eighth, ninth, and tenth chapters of the Epistle to the Hebrews.) Under the Christian System, all Christians are priests unto God, and Christ is their High Priest (King-Priest after the order of Melchizedek, Psa. 110:4; Heb. 6:20, 7:1-25). (Cf. 1 Pet. 2:5,9; Rev. 5:10; Rom. 12:1-2, 8:34; Heb. 2:17, also chs. 3,5,7; 1 Tim. 2:5, 1 John 2:1, etc.) It will be recalled that Alexander Campbell referred to the Patriarchal Dispensation as the starlight age, to the Jewish Dispensation as the moonlight age, to the special ministry of John the Baptizer (to the Jewish nation) as the twilight age, and to the present or Christian Dispensation (which may also rightly be designated the Dispensation of the Holy Spirit) as the sunlight age, of the unfolding of the Divine Plan of Redemption. These successive "ages," therefore, embrace the successive stages in the revelation

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of true religion as set forth in the Bible. Refusal to recognize this fundamental unity of the Bible as a whole can result only in confusion, presumption, and ultimate rejection by the Author of the Bible Himself.

6. *The Bible is pre-eminently the Book of Life.* Its pages are replete with "human interest" stories covering every phase of life *as man lives it*. While portraying the virtues of the great heroes of the faith in all ages, not for one moment does it turn aside to hide their frailties. It never deceives man. It tells him bluntly that he is in sin, in a lost condition, and in danger of perishing in hell; at the same time it offers the remedy (the blood of Christ, John 1:29, I John 1:7), and the means of applying the remedy (the preaching and acceptance of the Gospel, 1 Cor. 1:21, Rom. 1:16, Acts 2:38, 1 Cor. 15:1-4, Rom. 2:8, 1 Pet. 4:17). The Bible is the most realistic book ever given to man. Because it deals honestly with men, it is the most frequently attacked, ridiculed, maligned book in literature; and, I might truthfully add, the most abused and misrepresented by half-baked intellectuals.

7. *The Bible is the world's all-embracing Manual of Civilization.* Where the open Bible goes, men's minds are liberated from ignorance, error, superstition, etc., as well as from the guilt and the consequences of sin (John 8:31-32, 17:17). Where the open Bible goes, science flourishes, freedom is appreciated and exalted, and democracy is spread abroad. If all men everywhere could be induced to accept and to actually *live* the principles of human relationships as set forth in the Ten Commandments, in the Two Great Commandments, and in the Sermon on the Mount, our world would be a very different world from that which it is at present. (Cf. 2 Cor. 3:17, Jas. 1:25, 2:12, Gal. 2:4.) No man can add one iota to the body of moral and spiritual truth that is revealed in Scripture.

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II. THE BIBLE: WHAT IT IS NOT

It is almost as important for us to know, in this day of fantastic progress in human science, *what the Bible is not*, as to know *what it is*. The knowledge of *what it is not* will do much to clear away the false issues that have been raised in recent years in the form of alleged "conflicts" between the Bible and science. Let us look at the problem, therefore, negatively, as follows:

1. *The Bible is not, was never intended to be, a textbook of science.* The word "science" comes from the Latin *scientia*, "knowledge," which derives in turn from the Latin verb, *scio*, infinitive form, *scire*, "to know." A science is, literally, a knowledge, a human knowledge, of course. A science is of human origin strictly: it is what man assumes to know (or speaking precisely, what he *believes*, on the basis of very great probability) concerning the order which he finds characteristic of a given segment of the cosmos. (The Greek word *kosmos* means "order." If our world were not a framework of order, there could never be a science: not only would science be impossible, but life itself would be impossible: man could not live in a totally unpredictable environment.)

The Bible, on the other hand, presents itself to us as a book from God, as the record of God's progressive revelation of His will with respect to man's origin, nature, and destiny. It does not claim to be a scientific text: it offers itself strictly as the authentic textbook of Spirit-revealed religion.

As a matter of fact, the content of the Bible is largely pre-scientific. That is to say, the books of the Bible were written, for the most part, prior to the rise of human science. This is true especially of the books of the Old Testament canon; and even when the books of the New Testament were being indited, science was only in its initial stages: the *only* sciences that were being formulated at

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this time were certain mathematical sciences, especially arithmetic, geometry, and astronomy. It will be recalled that Plato, in the *Republic*, classified the mathematical sciences as follows: arithmetic, the science of numbering, or of one dimension; plane geometry, the science of two dimensions; solid geometry, the science of three dimensions; astronomy, the science of the three-dimensional world *and* motion; and harmony, the science of five functions, namely, the three dimensions *plus* motion *plus* numerical proportion. To these he added what he called the science of dialectic, the search for the essences (meanings) of things. Aristotle, Plato's pupil at the Academy for twenty years, wrote the first texts on economics, politics, ethics, logic, poetics (literary criticism), rhetoric, physics, astronomy, biology and psychology. The last four named, which belong in the category of what we now call the natural sciences, in the light of present-day knowledge were woefully unscientific as presented by Aristotle. However, his ethics, politics, logic, and poetics are almost as "modern" in their content as contemporary texts in these subjects.

It was never the intention of the Bible writers to produce a scientific textbook. The Genesis account of the Creation, for example, was not intended to be a scientific presentation: its author makes no attempt to give us an explanation of the *how* (the *method*) of Creation (and it must be remembered that the *how*, rather than the *why*, of things, is the specific area in which true science operates: outside that area it is no longer science). The writer of Genesis wrote with a purpose that was simply and solely *religious*: to impress upon man the truth that the cosmos and everything in it is the handiwork of the Will and Word of the living God (cf. Gen. 1:3,6,9,14,20,24,26; Psa. 33:6,9; Psa. 148:1-6; Heb. 11:3).

This non-scientific character of the Bible has long been recognized, even by the most "conservative" of scholars.

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For example, Marcus Dods, discussing the first two chapters of Genesis, has written as follows:

If any one is in search of accurate information regarding the age of the earth, or its relation to the sun, moon, and stars, or regarding the order in which plants and animals have appeared upon it, he is referred to textbooks in astronomy, geology, and palaeontology. No one for a moment dreams of referring the serious student of these subjects to the Bible as a source of information. It is not the object of the writers of Scripture to impart physical instruction or to enlarge the bounds of scientific knowledge. But if any one wishes to know what connection the world has with God, if he seeks to trace back all that now is to the very fountain-head of life, if he desires to discover some unifying principle, some illuminating purpose in the history of this earth, then we confidently refer him to these and subsequent chapters of Scripture as his safest, and indeed his only, guide to the information he seeks. Every writing must be judged by the object the writer has in view. If the object of the writer of these chapters was to convey physical information, then certainly it is imperfectly fulfilled. But if his object was to give an intelligible account of God's relation to the world and to man, then it must be owned that he has been successful in the highest degree.

It is therefore unreasonable for us to allow our reverence for this writing to be lessened because it does not anticipate the discoveries of physical science, or to repudiate its authority in its own department of truth because it does not give us information which it formed no part of the writer's object to give. As well might we deny to Shakespeare a masterly knowledge of human life, because his dramas are blotted by historical anachronisms . . .¹

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Alexander Campbell has written in like vein, warning us against trying to turn the Bible (Genesis included) into a scientific text:

It [the Bible] is not, then, a treatise on man . . . as he is physically, astronomically, geologically, politically, or metaphysically; but as he is, and ought to be, *morally and religiously.*²

I think I should repeat here, in passing, what I have stated heretofore, namely, that even though the content of the Bible (and of Genesis in particular), chronologically speaking, is pre-scientific, still and all it is fundamentally in harmony with contemporary science; that in fact there never was a time in the history of human thought when Biblical teaching and scientific theory were in greater accord than they are today. Why should it not be so? God has written two books: one is the Book of Nature in which He has revealed His "everlasting power and divinity" (Rom. 1:20, Psa. 19:1); the other is the Book of Redemption in which He has made known His immeasurable love and compassion (John 3:16-18, Eph. 2:4-7, Jas. 5:11, 1 Pet. 1:3). Now science is man's attempt to interpret the Book of Nature, and so-called "systematic theology" is man's attempt to interpret the Book of Redemption. Hence, there may be apparent conflicts between these interpretations, because the interpretations are of men and men are fallible, very much so. But by virtue of the fact that the Books themselves are from God, they cannot be contradictory in their contents. Hence, the Bible has no apology to make to science, nor has it anything to fear from science, for the obvious reason that it does not have any reason to fear truth under any guise, or in any branch of human knowledge. *And let me add here that it is a mistake to treat Genesis as a textbook of science by resorting to fantastic "interpretations" to make its content conform to the latest scientific theories. Insofar as this writer is concerned, the book of Genesis stands on its own two feet (if he may be*

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pardoned for using such a mixed metaphor): *it has nothing to fear from, nor any need for accommodation to, human theory and speculation.*

2. *The Bible is not, was never intended to be, a history of the human race.* It is, rather, the history of one genealogical Line, that is, the Line that flowered and terminated in Messiah, the Redeemer. Hence, as stated previously, the Bible is the history of the unfolding of the Plan of Redemption.

The story of the Bible begins, as it should begin, with the archetypal pair, male and female, Adam and Eve. The name "Adam," literally translated is simply "the man." Hence his counterpart bore the generic designation, "woman": as *ish* signifies "man," so *ishah*, the word used here, signifies "she-man," or as in Anglo-Saxon, "womb-man." Her generic name was, and is, Woman (Gen. 2:23), but the personal name of this particular woman was Eve, meaning "life," hence, "the mother of all living" (Gen. 3:20). Incidentally, the Septuagint gives the literal and correct rendering, "And Adam called his wife's name *Life*, because she was the mother of all *living*."

The Author of the Bible, the Spirit of God, is not concerned with the story of the human race as a whole, at any time of its existence, but only with the particular segment of the race which was destined to bring forth Messiah, the One through whom the Plan of Redemption for mankind was to be effectuated. In chapter 4 of Genesis, we are given, but only partially, the antediluvian genealogy of the Cainites, and in chapter 5 the antediluvian line of the Sethites, the account culminating in the story of Noah and the Flood. In a word, after Abel's death, it was Seth and his progeny who were appointed to carry on the genealogical Line that was to culminate in Messiah, Christos, Christ (terms all meaning "The Anointed One").

The Bible is the history of Messianic Line only, the Line that was to bring forth "in the fulness of the time" (Gal.

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4:4) the world's Redeemer. This Line is traced from Adam to Noah, through Seth, in the fifth chapter of Genesis; and after a brief diversion to give us the story of Noah and the Deluge, the Line is traced on down from Noah to Abraham (ch. 11).

With the Call of Abraham, the history became narrowed down to the story of the fleshly seed of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob—the children of Israel, as they were known in Old Testament times. God literally separated this people from the rest of humankind and put them into the pulpit of the world to do five things: (1) to preserve the knowledge of the living and true God, (2) to preserve the knowledge of the moral law (Gal. 3:19—"the law" was added because of transgressions, till the seed should come," etc.), (3) to prepare the world for the advent and ministry of Messiah, and (4) to build up a system of metaphor, type, allegory and prophecy designed to identify Messiah at His appearance in the flesh, and (5) actually to give the Messiah—Prophet, Priest, and King—to the world.

The account of this Messianic Line is carried forward in the various genealogical tables scattered throughout the Old Testament Scriptures. The termination of the Line is given us in the genealogies which appear in the first chapter of Matthew and the third chapter of Luke. Matthew, beginning with Abraham, the father of the Jewish nation, evidently gives us the *legal* genealogy through David, thence through Solomon down to Joseph—the genealogy that must have appeared in the archives of the synagogue. Luke, on the other hand, a Greek, and hence uninhibited by Jewish tradition, gives us the *natural* genealogy through Mary (the daughter of Heli) back to Nathan, another of David's sons, thence all the way back to Adam (Matt. 1:1-17, Luke 3:23-28). (See Dr. James Orr, *The Virgin Birth of Christ*, pp. 36-37). These genealogical tables are integral parts of the Scriptures, and are not to be passed over lightly.

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Suffice it to repeat here that the Bible is not intended to be a history of the human race. It is in fact the history of Redemption, the history of the Messianic Line, the Line that flowered in Messiah through whom God's Plan of Redemption for fallen man was executed. As Jesus Himself declared from His own Cross: "It is finished" (John 19:30).

3. *The Bible is not, was never intended to be, a book of philosophy.* Basically philosophy is the study of the meaning of concepts: it wants to know what the scientists mean by the terms from which they take off, in the various sciences—such terms as energy, matter, life, mind, consciousness, self-consciousness, personality, value, etc. In the branch of philosophy known as *philosophy of religion*, specialized attention is given to the subjects of God, freedom, and immortality: indeed, as Kant declared, these are the three fundamental subjects of philosophy in general. However, at its best, philosophy is strictly human speculation; hence it is not, and cannot be, a substitute for religious faith. The most it can do is to give us clues that might help us to a better understanding of the ultimates of the Mystery of Being. Although the Bible is not, in any sense of the term, a book of philosophy, still and all, as I have said to my classes many times, when I want the last word on almost any problem in philosophy, I turn to the Bible and there I find it. This is due to the fact, as stated previously, that the Bible is first, last, and always the Book of Life. Both scientists and philosophers would be safeguarded against skepticism, agnosticism, and all the other "isms," if they would literally live with the Bible and assimilate its teaching into their thought, and incorporate it into their living from day to day.

The Bible is the Book of Redemption; hence it is the book of the Spirit of God. "For who among men knoweth the things of a man, save the spirit of the man which is in him? even so, the things of God none knoweth, save the

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Spirit of God. But we received not the spirit of the world, but the spirit which is from God; that we might know the things that were freely given to us of God. Which things we also speak, not in words which man's wisdom teacheth, but which the Spirit teacheth, combining spiritual things with spiritual words" (1 Cor. 2:11-13). To the Spirit of God we are immediately indebted for all that is known, or knowable, of God, of the unseen world, or of the ultimate destinies of men. All that ancient and modern pagans pretend to have known or to know of these sublime topics, has either been borrowed from this Revealer of secrets, or else is mere conceit or conjecture of their own. The simple fact is that the truth to be believed by man respecting his own origin, constitution, and proper ends, could never have been known but by revelation of the Spirit. How profoundly thankful we should be, then, that our God has not left us in darkness, in that gross darkness in which heathen peoples are still struggling and suffering, but has, by His Spirit, revealed His Plan for our eternal redemption, and revealed it so clearly that wayfaring men, though fools, need not err therein (Isa. 35:8; cf. Rom. 16:25-27).

III. THE BOOKS OF OUR BIBLE

Our Bible is divided into two parts, known as the Old Testament and the New Testament. The Old Testament, with the exception of just a few passages written in Aramaic (Jer. 10:11; Ezra 4:8, apparently to 6:18, also 7:12-26; Dan. 2:4 to 7:28), was written originally in Hebrew. The New Testament was written originally in the Koine (common, "vulgar") Greek.

There are thirty-nine books in our Old Testament, classified as follows:

1. *Law* (5 books): Genesis, Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers, Deuteronomy.

2. *History* (12 books): Joshua, Judges, Ruth, 1 Samuel, 2 Samuel, 1 Kings, 2 Kings, 1 Chronicles, 2 Chronicles,

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Ezra, Nehemiah, Esther.

3. *Classics* (5 books): Job, Psalms, Proverbs, Ecclesiastes, Song of Solomon.

4. *Major Prophets* (5 books): Isaiah, Jeremiah, Lamentations, Ezekiel, Daniel.

5. *Minor Prophets* (12 books): Hosea, Joel, Amos, Obadiah, Jonah, Micah, Nahum, Habakkuk, Zephaniah, Haggai, Zechariah, Malachi.

There are twenty-seven books in our New Testament, classified as follows:

1. *Biography* (4 books): Matthew, Mark, Luke, John: all are narratives of the personal ministry of Jesus on earth, written to give us evidence that He is the Christ, the Son of the living God (Matt. 16:16, John 20:30-31, Heb. 2:1-4).

2. *History* (1 book): Acts of Apostles, written to tell us what to do to become Christians, members of the New Covenant (Acts 2:37-38, 8:26-40, 16:28-34).

3. *Instruction in Righteousness* (21 letters, written by the Apostles, divided into (1) *Special Letters* (14 books): Romans, 1 Corinthians, 2 Corinthians, Galatians, Ephesians, Philippians, Colossians, 1 Thessalonians, 2 Thessalonians, 1 Timothy, 2 Timothy, Titus, Philemon, Hebrews; and (2) *General Letters* (7 books): James, 1 Peter, 2 Peter, 1 John, 2 John, 3 John, Jude. These epistles were all written to Christians "for teaching, for reproof, for correction, for instruction which is in righteousness" (2 Tim. 3:16-17).

4. *Prophecy* (1 book): Revelation, or the Apocalypse, the story in prophetic symbolism (Rev. 1:1—"sign-ified") of the trials and triumphs, and the ultimate destiny of God's elect (chs. 21,22). Thus the Bible story which began with Paradise Lost, ends with Paradise Regained.

IV. THE HEBREW SCRIPTURES

The Hebrew Scriptures have always included all the

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books that make up our English Old Testament, but not in the same general order or arrangement. Whereas there are only twenty-four books in the Hebrew Scriptures, there are thirty-nine in our Old Testament. The content, however, is the same. The Hebrew Scriptures are divided as follows:

1. *The Law* (5 books), in Hebrew, the *Torah*; in Greek, the *Pentateuch* (five "tools," "books"): Genesis, Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers, Deuteronomy.

2. *The Prophets* (8 books), in Hebrew, *Nebim*. These are divided into two groups, designated the "former" and the "latter" Prophets, evidently with reference to the time order:

(1) *The Former Prophets* (4 books): Joshua, Judges, Samuel (one book, not two as in our Old Testament), and Kings (also one book, not two as in our Bible).

(2) *The Latter Prophets* (4 books): the three separate books of Isaiah, Jeremiah, and Ezekiel; and one book of the Twelve (twelve separate books in our Old Testament).

3. *The Writings* (11 books), in Hebrew, *Kethubim*; in Greek, *Hagiographa*, "sacred writings." These are divided as follows:

(1) *The Poetical Books* (3): Psalms, Proverbs, Job.

(2) *The Five Rolls* (5): Song, Ruth, Lamentations, Ecclesiastes, Esther.

(3) *The Historical Books* (3): Daniel, Ezra-Neemiah (one book), Chronicles (one book).

The Torah was always regarded as the most sacred of the holy writings, The Prophets next in point of reverence, and The Writings last. The Torah was Scripture *par excellence*, and still is, among the Jewish people. Using the structure of the Temple as a parallel, they said that The Writings were comparable to the Outer Court, The Prophets to the Holy Place, but The Law was, and is, the Holy of Holies.

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Of the Five Rolls, one was read at each of the great national festivals, as follows:

The Song of Solomon, at the Passover (roughly in our April);

Ruth, at Pentecost (in our June);

Lamentations, at the Commemoration of the Fall of Jerusalem (on the ninth day of the month Ab, roughly our August);

Ecclesiastes, at the Feast of Tabernacles (in our October);

Esther, at the Feast of Purim (in our March).

As stated above, among the Jews the Torah has always been, and still is, the most revered document of Hebrew literature, and indeed of world literature. To the Jewish people, it is not only the Book of the Law—it is truly the Book of Life, that is, “life” as synonymous with “experience.” Hence the Jewish nation has ever taken pride in being known as “the People of the Book.”

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The five books, Genesis, Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers, and Deuteronomy, which are known, as a unit, as the Torah in the Hebrew Scriptures, have come to be known, again as a unit, as the Pentateuch, in our Bible. This word *Pentateuch* derives from the Greek *penta* (“five”) and *teuchos* (primary meaning “tool” or “implement,” with secondary meanings of a “fabric” or a “case” for holding papyrus rolls; hence used for the “roll” or “book” itself).³ As Dummelow writes, “Pentateuch is a Greek word meaning ‘the fivefold volume,’ and has been used since the time of Origen (third century A.D.) as a convenient designation for the first five books of the Bible.”⁴

The first book of the Pentateuch, the Book of Genesis—the title is a transliteration of the Greek word *genesis*, which means “beginning”—is in a special sense The Book of Beginnings. In it we find the account of the beginnings

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of the world and man, of domestic and civil society, of liberty and law, of sin and death, of the elements of true religion (altar, sacrifice, and priesthood), of the Plan of Redemption, of the facets of human culture, of the early ethnic groups of mankind, of the Messianic genealogy, of the Hebrew People and their divinely ordained mission, of the Abrahamic Promise and the Old Covenant: presenting as a whole the history of the Patriarchal Dispensation (which extended from Adam to Moses, that is, from the Creation to the establishment of the Hebrew Theocracy at Sinai). In view of these sublime themes, especially in their relation to the fundamental problems of the origin, nature and destiny of man, what a lacuna there would be in man's knowledge, and especially in his moral and spiritual understanding, had the Book of Genesis never have been written! Its profound revelations of these matters which are inseparably interwoven with every aspect of human thought and life, such themes as God, man, good, evil, sin, death, religion, redemption, etc., make it one of the indispensable works of revealed literature, and indeed of all literature both sacred and profane.

From first to last the sacred motif of redemption binds the sixty-six books of the Bible into a sublime whole: the motif of redemption through Christ Jesus. We are not surprised, therefore, to note that even the Book of Genesis is Christ-centered ("Christocentric"). Prophetic references to Messiah are numerous in Genesis, as follows:

(1) He would be the Seed of the Woman (Gen. 3:14-15, Matt. 1:18-23, Luke 1:26-38, Gal. 4:4-5);

(2) He would overcome the Old Serpent, the Devil (Gen. 3:14-15, Heb. 2:14-15; Rev. 12:10-12, 20:7-10);

(3) He would be of the seed of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, respectively (Gen. 12:3, 18:18, 22:18, 26:4; Acts 3:25-26; Gal. 3:16; Heb. 11:17-18);

(4) He would be of the tribe of Judah (Gen. 49:10; Psa. 2:6-9, 60:7, 108:8; Heb. 7:14, Rev. 5:5).

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Hence, said Jesus to the caviling Jews, John 8:56—"Your father Abraham rejoiced to see my day; and he saw it, and was glad." And the Apostle Paul testifies, Gal. 3:8—"And the scripture, foreseeing that God would justify the Gentiles by faith, preached the gospel before unto Abraham, saying, In thee shall all the nations be blessed." To this he adds, Gal. 3:16—"Now to Abraham were the promises spoken, and to his seed. He saith not, And to seeds, as of many; but as of one, And to thy seed, which is Christ." As a matter of fact, the very heart of the Abrahamic Promise was the promise of the Reign of Messiah. Moreover, not only in prophecy, but in simile, metaphor, allegory, type, and poetic imagery, the content of Genesis foreshadows the Messiah and the Messianic Institution (cf. Rom. 5:14; Gal. 4:21-31; Gen. 28:12, John 1:51; Gen. 2:21-25; Rev. 21:2, 22:17; 1 Pet. 3:18-22, etc.). We may say rightly that from Adam to Abraham, the Gospel existed in *purpose*, that is, in God's eternal purpose (Eph. 3:1-13, 1:3-14; Rom. 8:28-30); that from Abraham to Isaiah, the Gospel existed in *promise* (the "Abrahamic Promise"); that from Isaiah to Malachi, the Gospel existed in *prophecy* (2 Pet. 1:21); that throughout the personal ministry of Jesus, the Gospel existed in *preparation* (preparation for the Reign of Messiah: cf. Matt. 28:18-20; John 16:7-16, 18:36-37, 20:19-22; Luke 24:45-49; Acts 1:1-8; Heb. 2:1-4); that beginning with Pentecost, A.D. 30, the advent of the Spirit, and the incorporation of the Body of Christ, the Gospel, with its facts, commands, and promises, exists and is proclaimed as *fact* (1 Cor. 15:1-4; Acts 2:22-42; Rom. 10:9-10; Rom. 6:23, etc.).

Critics, exegetes, commentators, "theologians," etc., would do well to accept the fact that they either distort or miss altogether much of the plain teaching of the Bible, including the Book of Genesis, by refusing to accept it as a whole and thus to let it "interpret" itself.

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VI. DIVISIONS OF THE BOOK OF GENESIS

Dr. Julian Morgenstern writes that one central theme gives to the Book of Genesis its unity of thought. "This central theme," he goes on to say, "is God's selection of Israel to be the witness and messenger of His truth and His law unto all the peoples of the earth, and His testing and preparation of Israel for this arduous and sacred task." This central theme, adds Morgenstern, is resolved into four "natural and logical concepts. (1) God and mankind, (2) God and Israel, (3) God's purification and preparation of Israel for His service, and (4) God's providence." This author then suggests four main divisions, writing of course strictly from the Jewish point of view, as follows: (1) Chs. I-XI, stories about mankind in general; (2) Chs. XII-XXV:18, the story of Abraham; (3) Chs. XXV:19-XXXVI, the story of Jacob; (4) Chs. XXXVII-L, the story of Joseph.⁵ (Morgenstern follows the now outmoded notion that these stories of the Patriarchs are simply "folk tales," not accounts of real events in the lives of historical personages. This view has been completely disproved by archeological discoveries.)

The Jewish point of view is clearly stated in a book recently published under the editorship of Gaalyahu Cornfeld, as follows:

The book of Genesis, in its present setting, may be divided into two parts, of which the first (chs. 1-11) presents a Hebrew view of the early history of mankind. This comprises the Flood; the rise of separate nations, and the genealogy of the sons of Shem (Semites); more particularly how the ancestors of the Hebrews were related to other nations, and how they emerged gradually into a separate and distinct existence beside them. Following this, but related to the foregoing, the second part of Genesis (chs. 12-50) comprises in particular the history of the Patriarchs, the immediate ancestors of Israel.⁶

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Strictly speaking, Genesis is a book of two distinct parts, namely, Part One (chs. 1-11), giving us the early history of man without regard to distinction between Jew and Gentile, and Part Two (chs. 12-50) giving us the historical origins of the Hebrew people, the people whom God put in the pulpit of the world to preserve among men the knowledge of Him as the One living and true God.

Dr. G. Campbell Morgan suggests that in general outline the Book of Genesis might be divided, according to main themes, respectively, as follows:

Generation: 1:1-2:25

Degeneration: chs. 3-10

Regeneration: chs. 11-50⁷

Another rather simple plan of sectioning the Book that is frequently suggested is the following:

I. The Beginnings of History (chs. 1-11).

1. The Origin of the World and Man (chs. 1-5)

2. The Story of the Flood (chs. 6-9)

3. The Place of the Hebrew People among the Nations. (We use "people" here as synonymous with "nation." The United States is called the "melting-pot of nations," that is, of different peoples or ethnic groups.) (Chs. 10, 11).

II. The History of the Patriarchs (chs. 12-50)

1. The Abraham-Isaac Story (chs. 12-26)

2. The Jacob-Esau Stories (chs. 27-36)

3. The Story of Joseph and His Brothers (chs. 37-50)

Perhaps the best method of outlining the content of Genesis is that which is suggested by the use of the word *toledoth*. This word, meaning "generations," occurs as a kind of key to the ten sections of the book, as follows:

Introduction: The Creation Narrative (chs. 1:1-2:3)

I. The Generations of the Heavens and the Earth
(chs. 2:4-4:26)

II. The Generations of Adam (chs. 5:1-6:8)

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- III. The Generations of Noah (chs. 6:9—9:29)
- IV. The Generations of the Sons of Noah (chs. 10:1—11:9)
 - V. The Generations of Shem (chs. 11:10-26)
 - VI. The Generations of Terah (chs. 11:27—25:11)
 - VII. The Generations of Ishmael (ch. 25:12-18)
- VIII. The Generations of Isaac (chs. 25:19—35:29)
 - IX. The Generations of Esau (ch. 36)
 - X. The Generations of Jacob (chs. 37:2—50:26)

The plan of sectioning Genesis that we have chosen to use in this text, it will be noted, follows the general pattern of the successive beginnings described in the book, beginning with the Hebrew Cosmogony, the Beginning of all beginnings (1:1—2:3).

VII. THE AUTHORSHIP OF THE PENTATEUCH

The problem of the authorship of the Pentateuch, as projected by modern Biblical criticism, is too complex to be presented here in its various ramifications. Hence, a statement of the critical theory, in its broad outlines, will have to suffice for present purposes.

The Pentateuch as it has come down to us in the Hebrew Scriptures (as the Torah) is generally accepted as a unity in its general content. But—how was this unity effected? The traditional view, held by the Jewish Synagogue, by the New Testament writers, by the Christian Church throughout the centuries, and by practically all commentators, both Jewish and Christian, was that the Pentateuch basically was the work of a single writer, namely, Moses, the great Lawgiver and Mediator of the Old Covenant. This view was never seriously questioned until the rise of modern Biblical criticism in the eighteenth century, according to which the Pentateuch is the work either of a single editor (redactor), or more probably the work of a succession or “school” of redactors.

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Perhaps it should be explained here that this modern Biblical criticism takes two general forms: (1) the *Lower Criticism*, which is defined as the highly specialized branch of "scientific" investigation of the authenticity of the text, including examination of root words, idioms, possible anachronisms, etc., to determine how closely the original text has been preserved; and (2) the *Higher Criticism*, which has to do with the authorship and dates of composition of the various books, and their historical reliability, especially as correlated with the cultural background indicated by each. Essentially the Lower Criticism is textual criticism, the Higher Criticism the combined literary and historical criticism, of the canonical books as such.

The four steps in the so-called historical method (of this Biblical criticism) have been well stated as follows: 1. The grammatical analysis of the document: the effort to arrive at what it says, including the study of distinctions between transliteration (transfer of letters) and translation (transfer of meaning); 2. The effort to determine to what extent the existing document reproduces the original; 3. The effort to determine whether the original document is a true record; and 4. The comparison of the record with other available documents, sacred and profane.

According to the modern critical theory, called the Graf-Wellhausen theory, and the Documentary theory, the Pentateuch (rather, the Hexateuch; the critics added the Book of Joshua to the Torah proper, as necessary, in their opinion, to the completeness of the unity of the whole), was formed from a number of documents ("codes") all originating long after the death of Moses, but containing Mosaic "traditions." (The only part of the entire Pentateuch which the advocates of this theory were willing to accept at first as of Mosaic origin, albeit this grudgingly, was the Decalogue itself.) The various "codes" postulated by the Documentary Theory were designated and dated as follows:

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1. The *Yahwist Code* (J), alleged to have been indited in the ninth century B.C., in the Southern Kingdom (Judah), and said to be identified (1) by its use of the Name *Yahweh* for God (or *Jahweh*, rendered *Jehovah* in our earlier English versions), (2) by its felicitous use of the narrative style, (3) by its many human interest stories, (4) by its anthropomorphic pictures of God, and (5) by its special emphasis on God's dealings with His creature, man. Because it is thought to have originated in the Southern Kingdom it is also known as the *Judean Code*.

2. The *Elohistic Code* (E), alleged to have been written down in the eighth century B.C., in the Northern Kingdom (Israel), and said to be characterized especially (1) by its use of the Name *Elohim* for God, (2) by its emphasis on the transcendence (sublimity and majesty) of God as "the high and lofty One that inhabiteth eternity" (Isa. 57:15), (3) by its lack of anthropomorphism, and (4) by its emphasis on the supernatural. Because it is thought to have originated in the Northern Kingdom, it is also known as the *Ephraimitic Code*, after the tribe of Ephraim, the most powerful of the tribes of Israel.

3. JE, said to have been put together by an unknown redactor (or redactors) and to have made its appearance in the seventh century B.C. (It is not claimed, of course, that these writers invented the material; rather, it is held that they put in writing the early ethnic traditions of the Hebrew people handed down orally for the most part, but along with some that had been preserved in writing.)

4. The *Deuteronomic Code* (D), the "book of the law," alleged to have been produced anonymously by a prophetic writer, but "in the spirit of Moses," some time between 715 and 640 B.C. (during the reign of Hezekiah, Manasseh, Amon, or Josiah; there is disagreement on this point), for the purpose of centralizing the worship of Yahweh at one place ("the law of the central sanctuary"), attributed to

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Moses by deliberate design to clothe it with the authority of the most revered name in Hebrew history and tradition; and hence to have been discovered—most opportunely—in the rubbish of the Temple, 621 B.C., in the reign of Josiah, as related in 2 Kings, ch. 22. Thus, according to the critical theory, the Book of Deuteronomy can hardly escape the onus of having originated as a kind of “pious fraud.”

5. The *Holiness Code* (H), identified as chs. 17 through 26 of the Book of Leviticus, and said to have been composed by an Exilic writer, to emphasize especially the holiness of God (Lev. 19:2, 20:7, 20:26, 21:8); hence its name. (This Code was first recognized as separate, and so named by Klostermann in 1877.) The critics find a close spiritual kinship between the style and content of H and that of Ezekiel, and hold that both played a large part in the legalistic development of the Jewish religion which culminated in the Priestly Code. We are told that we do not have H in its original form, but only as it has been incorporated into the great Priestly Code.

6. The *Priestly Code* (P), alleged to have been composed by a writer or writers of the priestly class during the Exile (586-536 B.C.). This Code is said to be identified by its emphasis on the ritual practices of the religion of Israel, on their laws of sacrifice, on their religious ceremonies and festivals, and on their long genealogies designed to emphasize the priestly purity of lineage. P is described as marked especially by its austerity of style, as in the narrative of the Creation (Gen. 1:1-2:3). It is said to have been the bulwark of the reign of legalism in ancient Israel.

The Priestly Code is held to have been completed about 500 B.C., and to have been the framework into which the various earlier Documents were fitted, to make complete the venerable “divine library” of the Pentateuch. By one or more redactors, we are told, all previous Codes were woven together, and thus the canon of the Torah became fixed by the time of Ezra. As Barclay summarizes:

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Everything points to the probability that the Law acquired the status of fully accepted Scripture, that it became in a sense the binding word of God for Israel, in the time of Ezra and Nehemiah, that is, about 400 B.C.⁸

This conclusion is further established by the following facts: 1. The Samaritan Bible was the Torah or Pentateuch exclusively: the Samaritans never recognized any other ancient writings as Scripture. Hence, they must have received the Torah before the Samaritan Schism which occurred about 432 B.C. (The Samaritans claimed that their Pentateuch dated from 722 B.C., the date of the fall of their capital Samaria to their Assyrian conquerors. This claim, however, is discounted, we are told, by Bible "scholars" generally.) 2. In Neh. 8:3, we read that Ezra read "the book of the law" to the assembled people, and that the reading took from early morning until midday; hence it must have been the complete Torah that was read publicly on this memorable occasion, and not just one or more of the hypothetical Codes. The reading of ancient Semitic languages, we are told by linguistic scholars, took considerable less time than does the reading of English: this fact would allow for the reading of the entire Torah in the time specified. 3. After the time of Ezra, post-Exilic writers referred to the Law with special reverence (cf. Hag. 2:11, Zech. 7:12, Mal. 4:4). 4. The translation of the Hebrew Old Testament into Greek, under the auspices of Ptolemy II Philadelphus (king of Egypt, 285-246 B.C.), known as the Septuagint (designated by the symbol LXX), makes it evident beyond question that by this date the Torah was *par excellence* the sacred book of the Jews. At that time the Pentateuch was Scripture and evidently had been venerated as such for no one knows how long previously.

The grounds on which the critics propose the Documentary Theory of the Pentateuch may be summarized as follows:

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1. The repeated occurrence of the two different names for God, *Yahweh* and *Elohim*. Cf. with Exo. 6:2 the following: Gen. 4:1, 4:26; 15:2,8; 16:2, 22:14; 24:31,35; 26:25,28, etc. Cf. also Exo. 6:3 with Gen. 17:1, 28:3, 35:11, 43:14, 48:3, 49:25, with reference to the name El Shaddai ("God Almighty").

(N.B.—We are listing here Scripture passages, especially those from the Book of Genesis, that are cited by the critics in support of their theories: of course, we cannot cover the whole field of the Pentateuch in this textbook. We shall consider the validity of the critical arguments based on these passages, as we encounter them, one by one, in our study of the text of Genesis.)

2. Alleged discrepancies in accounts of the same event. *E.g.*, (1) The Creation. Cf. Gen. 1:1—2:3 and Gen. 2:4-25. In Gen. 1, the critics tell us, man and woman are said to have been created after the physical world and all the sub-human orders; whereas, in Gen. 2, man is said to have been created first, then the animals, and finally woman. (2) The Flood. Cf. Gen. 6:9-22 (esp. v. 19) with Gen. 7:1-10 (esp. vv. 2,3). In the former passage God is said to have ordered the animals taken into the ark by twos, the male and the female; in the latter, He is said to have ordered all clean beasts to be taken into the ark by sevens, and unclean beasts by two. Furthermore, in Gen. 7:8-9, we read that the animals went into the ark, two and two, "male and female, as God commanded it." The critics see much confusion in these various accounts. (3) Boundaries of the Promised Land. Cf. Gen. 15:18-21 with Num. 34:1-12. (4) Alleged differing accounts of how Beersheba got its name. Gen. 21:31—here the name is traced to a covenant between Abraham and Abimelech. Gen. 26:26-31: here the origin of the name is associated with a covenant between Isaac and Abimelech. (5) Alleged different accounts of how Bethel received its name. Gen. 28:18,19—here the origin of the name is associated with Jacob's vision on his way to

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Paddan-Aram. Gen. 35:15—here the origin of the name is traced to the incident of God's appearance to Jacob on the latter's return from Paddan-Aram.

3. Alleged anachronisms, in relation to the actual date of Moses and his work. (1) Deut. 34. The critics ask: Did Moses write his own obituary? (2) Gen. 36. Here we have a long list of the kings of Edom. In v. 31 we are told that all these reigned before Israel had a king. The critics contend that the royal succession in Edom was thus projected, in this passage, down to the time of King Saul at least, and hence long after the time of Moses. (3) Gen. 14:14. Here we read that Abraham pursued *as far as Dan* the kings who had taken Lot captive. Judges 18:29—here it appears that Dan was given its name long after the time of Moses. (4) Gen. 21-34, 26:14-18, Exo. 13:17. In these and other passages we find repeated references to the Philistines. But the best historical evidence obtained thus far seems to indicate that the Philistines did not enter Palestine (which got its name from *Philistia*) until about 1250 or 1200 B.C., a considerable time after the death of Moses, we are told.

4. Alleged variations in the accounts of specific events. (1) The Abrahamic Covenant. Cf. ch. 15 with chs. 17 and 18 of Genesis. (2) The taking of Sarah. Cf. Gen. 12:10-19 with 20:1 and 26:1-11. (3) The banishment of Hagar: in Gen. 16:9-21, apparently before Ishmael was born; in Gen. 21:9-21, apparently after the birth of Ishmael. (4) The Covenant with Abimelech. Cf. Gen. 21:22-34 with 26:26-33. (5) The story of Esau and his birthright. Cf. Gen. 25:27-33 with 27:1-40.

5. Alleged diversity of language, style, motif, and ideas, characteristic especially of E. and J. The Elohist is said generally to depict the simple and non-artificial mores of primitive times: the Yahwist, on the other hand, to reflect the era of Mosaic law and Levitical institutions. Again, the Elohist is described as writing of God in lofty and majestic terms; the Yahwist, in terms of His Fatherly rapport

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with His chosen people. The Yahwist God is fundamentally the Covenant God.

Some of the alleged traces (in Genesis) of a later age which dispose the critics to reject the Mosaic authorship of the book, and of the Pentateuch as a whole, may be listed as follows:

1. The alleged Palestinian standpoint of the writer (Moses, of course, was not permitted to enter the Promised Land himself: cf. Deut. 34:1-8). Cf. Gen. 12:8, 50:11, for example.
2. The occurrences of the phrase, "unto this day." Cf. Gen. 19:37,38; 26:33; 32:32; 35:20; 47:26, etc.
3. Statements alleged to presuppose the occupation of the land. Cf. Gen. 12:6, 13:7, 36:31, 40:15.
4. Instances of the interpretation of ancient names of cities by the introduction of names of later origin. Cf. Gen. 14: 2,8,17; 23:2; 35:19.
5. References to customs alleged to belong only to a later age. Cf. Gen. 4:3,4,14; 7:8, 8:20, 17:26, 24:22,30; 25:22; 37:3,23. (The various Scriptures cited in the foregoing lists, and others of like import, will be dealt with in this text, when they occur in our study of the text of Genesis itself.)

(If the student desires to make a detailed study of this problem of the Mosaic authorship of the Pentateuch, or of Genesis in particular, he will find what I consider to be the most completely organized and most comprehensive presentation of the subject, pro and con, in the articles, "The Authorship of the Pentateuch" and "Introduction to the Book of Genesis," by Thomas Whitelaw, in the General Introduction to *The Pulpit Commentary: Genesis*. Although this was a relatively early work, it covers all the ramifications of the subject in a thoroughgoing manner. Contemporary students would find themselves greatly benefited by returning to some of the standard works (defending the Mosaic authorship) which appeared in the days when the Documentary Theory was first being exploited.)

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Let us now take a look at the other side of the coin, for the benefit especially of students who, in the "standardized" theological seminary are usually dogmatically "brain-washed" in support of the Documentary Theory, and hence have little or no awareness of the arguments which can validly be marshaled against it.

In the first place, let us examine some of the claims made by the critics in the early days of the exploitation of the Graf-Wellhausen Theory which are now completely exploded. These may be summarized as follows:

1. The claim that Moses could not have written the Pentateuch because script was unknown in his day. Archaeology has proved this contention to be completely false. The Amarna Letters discovered in the Nile Valley in 1887; the Nuzi (in Eastern Mesopotamia) and the Mari (from Mari, the ancient Amorite capital on the Middle Euphrates) clay tablets, found recently in Mesopotamia, the North Canaanite literature discovered at Ras Shamra (the ancient Ugarit), all pre-Mosaic in origin, all in cuneiform, prove that script was in common use long before the time of Moses. The evidence is also clear that scribal schools of translators were functioning in very early times. It is now recognized by archaeologists that Egyptian hieroglyphic script had its origin in great antiquity; that in Mesopotamia, the cuneiform writing was equally ancient. As a matter of fact, the cuneiform, we are told, became the medium in which many of the dialects of the Fertile Crescent became stereotyped. W. F. Albright, the distinguished Orientalist, writes: "Cuneiform . . . was employed to write many different languages, mostly non-Semitic, in the course of its long history and wide diffusion." Again, with reference to Hebrew script, Albright states unequivocally: "It is certain that the Hebrew alphabet was written with ink and used for every-day purposes in the 14th and 13th centuries B.C." Albright dates Moses and the Exodus at about 1280 B.C.⁹

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2. The claim that the names of the Patriarchs as given us in Genesis, traditionally held to be personal names, most likely were not personal names at all, but tribal names, projected back into antiquity in the form of tribal folklore. As Wellhausen himself wrote:

We attain to no historical knowledge of the patriarchs, but only of the time when the stories about them arose in the Israelite people; this latter age is here unconsciously projected, in its inner and its outward features, into hoary antiquity, and is reflected there like a glorified image.¹⁰

This theory is completely discredited today. In Pfeiffer's explicit statements,

. . . we can now assert without fear of contradiction that the Biblical patriarchs need not be regarded as demigods or characters from the realm of folk-lore. They appear as real men, living in a real world which is now well-known because of the work of modern archaeology.¹¹

Or, in the words of the distinguished Jewish scholar, Dr. Nelson Glueck of Hebrew Union College:

The archaeological explorer in Bible lands must be aware of the fact that as important as the Bible is for historical information, it is definitely not primarily a chronicle of history, as we understand that term today. It is above all concerned with true religion and only secondarily with illustrative records. Even if the latter had suffered through faulty transmission or embellishments, the purity and primacy of the Bible's innermost message would not thereby be diminished. As a matter of fact, however, it may be stated categorically that no archaeological discovery has ever controverted a Biblical reference. Scores of archaeological findings have been made which confirm in clear outline or in exact detail historical statements in the Bible. And, by the same token, proper evaluation of Biblical descrip-

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tions has often led to amazing discoveries. They form tesserae in the vast mosaic of the Bible's almost incredibly correct historical memory.¹²

In a word, these dedicated fellows with their picks and spades and shovels have just about succeeded in demolishing every claim that was put forward by the destructive critics who flourished before and after the turn of the century. A final testimony here, from the pen of a distinguished contributor to the *Interpreter's Bible*, Vol. I, is fitting:

Archaeology has revealed an extraordinary correspondence between the general social and cultural conditions portrayed in Genesis and those exposed by excavations. Discoveries from such sites as Nuzi, Mari, and elsewhere, provide the geographical, cultural, linguistic, and religious background against which the stories of the patriarchs are laid.¹³

Thus it becomes evident that the claim that the cultural background of Genesis reflects the milieu of a much later age, at least Exilic or post-Exilic, does not stand up in the face of the facts. The historicity of the personages and events related in the Book of Origins seems now to be firmly established. To this end Dr. Albright summarizes as follows:

As critical study of the Bible is more and more influenced by the rich new material from the ancient Near East we shall see a steady rise in respect for the historical significance of now neglected or despised passages and details in the Old and New Testaments.¹⁴

In the second place, the attitudes and presuppositions of the critics who formulated the Documentary Theory, are matters of prime importance. These may be stated as follows:

1. The critics were, without exception, men who rejected even the possibility of the miraculous, the superhuman, or the supernatural, and hence proceeded to rewrite Biblical history to make it conform to their presuppositions. This

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bias, of course, prevented their examination of the contents of the Pentateuchal books simply as they found them and as we still have them in our day. 2. The Bible presents itself to us as the record of God's progressive revelation to man, communicated by the Spirit of God. (Cf. 2 Pet. 1:21, 1 Pet. 1:10-12, 1 Thess. 2:13, 1 Cor. 2:6-16, etc.) The critic who proposes to treat the Bible as he would treat "any other book" must first dispose of this claim of special inspiration which the Bible makes for itself; this the destructive critics do simply by ignoring it. As far as they are concerned, it could be said of them as the disciples whom Paul, on occasion, found at Ephesus said of themselves, namely, that they did not so much as know that there is a Holy Spirit (Acts 19:1-7). This could hardly be said to be an intellectually honest attitude. 3. These critics exemplify the Teutonic mentality which seems always to have been afflicted with two blind spots especially, namely, (1) the inability to see the forest for the trees, that is, the predilection to search microscopically for discrepancies and hence to find them where they do not occur, but arbitrarily ignoring any likelihood of harmonies; and (2) the unwillingness to accept any literary product as new, but always persisting in the search for "sources," even where sources were not to be found.

4. In their approach to their task, these critics have depended on minute analytical examination of internal characteristics of ancient literary productions. This has resulted in confusion confounded, even among the critics themselves. This type of critical study has led to the most absurd claims, pretensions, disagreements, and controversies, even over the most trivial matters. This is true not only of their critical studies of the Old and New Testament books, but equally so of their treatment of the Homeric epics, of the dialogues of Plato, of the texts of Aristotle, indeed of every ancient document that might be found to lend itself to this hair-splitting type of subjective analysis. Take, for exam-

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ple, the critical theories of the *Iliad* and of the *Odyssey* of Homer. Wolf dubbed the *Iliad* a conglomeration of fragments; Lachmann proposed the theory of nineteen different "lays" as constituting the framework of the poem; G. Herman advanced what is called the "kernel" theory, a poetic core supplemented and completed by redactors. (How could we get along without these "redactors"?) Christ assigned two-third of our *Iliad*, Bergk two-fifths of it, Leaf about one-sixth of it, to the original Homer. Kirchoff, Wilamowitz, Seeck, Sittl, Doerpfeld, et al, are responsible for as many conflicting views of the structure of the *Odyssey*.¹⁵ Similarly, one might compare the theories of the Platonic canon as put forward by such German critics as Tenneman, Schleiermacher, Ast, Socher, K. F. Hermann, Munk, Teuchmueller, Ueberweg, et al, to find little more than a "labyrinth of disagreement." The amazing fact about it all is that many of these theories were accepted, at least for a time, in spite of the fact that the critics seldom if ever agreed among themselves. Practically all ancient writings have been made the butts of this irresponsible methodology.

5. The methodology of the critics who formulated the Documentary Theory was simply that of the application of the notion of *evolutionary* development to Biblical history and religion. To them, Biblical religion, indeed any and all religion, was not a Divine communication (revelation) of any kind, but simply a human invention. The "reconstruction" made by the Graf-Kuenen-Wellhausen school was based on the Hegelian (theoretical) norm of the historical process, as a kind of spiral evolution consisting of a sequence of theses, antitheses, and syntheses, respectively (it will be recalled that Marx made this Hegelian norm the basis of his theory of economic change). In applying this Hegelian norm to the Pentateuchal subject-matter, the critics postulated a threefold development as pre-prophetic, prophetic, and legal, in the order named. To

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this they added the general "evolutionary" theory of man's invention of religion, by describing the process as proceeding from the polytheistic (animistic), to the henotheistic (characterized by the sovereignty of a single god over the entire pantheon; as Zeus in Greece, Jupiter in Rome, etc.), to the monotheistic (the sovereignty of one God). This developmental theory was extended later by the positivistic school to include the alleged ultimate "evolution" of monotheism into pantheism (the identification of God with nature or with a Force operating in nature) or into a self-styled "scientific humanism," which Comte designated "the religion of humanity" (whatever that phrase might mean). This notion of a "religion" without any real God (objective Deity) was fully elaborated by the late John Dewey in his little book, *A Common Faith*. Here Dewey rejects the conception of God as "some kind of Being having prior and therefore non-ideal existence" (obviously, this circumlocution, "non-ideal," could designate only existence as Other than man, that is, Dewey's "God" exists only in man's imagination); he states explicitly that the term "God" for him denoted "the unity of all ideal ends arousing us to desire and actions,"¹⁶ a kind of insipid, colorless phrase, one that surely could never generate any great measure of zeal in man. (Comte was convinced that his "religion of humanity" would ultimately become the one and only "universal religion," once the intelligentsia—rather than the meek—should inherit the earth.)

Thus it will be seen that the Documentary Theory was simply another of the many determined attempts, so prevalent at the turn of the century, to apply the evolution yardstick to all aspects of human knowledge and activity. As such, writes a currently eminent scholar, "the documents of the Hexateuch . . . must now be considered as mainly editions, employing far older material," and to this he adds, and the evolutionary scheme, supposedly derived from them, is now known to be far too simple. For example,

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ancient religion by the time of the Patriarchs was far advanced beyond an animistic stage, though survivals of animism are common throughout the Bible. In fact, archaeology through its demonstration of the antiquity of "high gods" reveals that the whole question of a simple animism is open to some suspicion.¹⁷

(This author insists, of course, that the over-all framework of the Hexateuch as hypothesized by the Graf-Wellhausen theory ("reconstruction") is still generally valid.)

In the third place, we must consider briefly the theory of "literary fabrication," an integral part of the whole Documentary Hypothesis. According to this theory, in ancient times literary works produced rather late chronologically were often projected in content back into antiquity, in order to vest them with the necessary authority of a venerable name, to secure their acceptance by the people, all this for religious ends, of course (such as centralization of worship, restoration of the authority of a priestly caste, etc.). The notable example of this practice, as alleged in the Documentary Theory, is the Book of Deuteronomy. If this theory of Deuteronomy is true, the book must be regarded, in its origin at least, as a "pious fraud." Albright makes the following comments:

The principle of the authority of the written word is not really new, since it has long been recognized as obtaining in most periods and regions where the art of writing has been sufficiently practiced. However, biblical scholars have been misled by the analogy of Graeco-Roman antiquity into exaggerating the possibility of "pious fraud" in the fabrication of written records and documents beyond all analogy. Nearly every book and passage of the Old Testament has been stigmatized as a literary forgery by at least one scholar. Now it cannot be emphasized too strongly that there is hardly any evidence at all in the ancient Near East for documentary or literary fabrications.¹⁸

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It is difficult to understand how this theory of "literary fabrication" could be seriously entertained by anyone who has any respect for piety and right. Unfortunately, however, intellectual honesty is often not valued too highly in some academic circles.

Let us now consider what the Mosaic authorship of the Pentateuch does not necessarily exclude, as follows:

1. It does not necessarily exclude the use of both oral tradition and written sources by the great Lawgiver. As Whitelaw has written:

That the author of the Book of Origins should have availed himself of pre-existing materials in the composition of his great historical work seems no more an unreasonable suggestion than that the four evangelists should have drawn upon already circulating memoirs of our Lord's life and work in the construction of their respective Gospels. Nor does any sober critic or intelligent student of the Bible now believe that such a supposition is fatal to the claims either of the Pentateuch and the Gospels to be received as canonical Scriptures or of their writers to be regarded as inspired teachers.¹⁹

We must remember that Moses was nurtured in the faith of his people even from his mother's breast (Exo. 2:7-10) and was also instructed, we are told, "in all the wisdom of the Egyptians" (Acts 7:22). Hence, in the composition of the Pentateuch he may well have used long-existing oral traditions and written sources as well. It is well-known today that the content of many ancient religious books was transmitted orally from generation to generation. Oral communication was highly regarded in ancient times; as a matter of fact, Plato repeatedly emphasized the superiority of the oral to the written word.²⁰ Albright comments: "As has often been emphasized by scholars, writing was used in antiquity largely as an aid or guide to memory, not as a substitute for it."²¹ There can be little doubt that oral

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traditions were extant among the Hebrews in the period of their beginnings (the Patriarchal Age), probably going back into the far reaches of Semitic history, and that these were available to Moses when the time came for him to assume his momentous task of building a nation.

The same is true with reference to written sources. It is likely that Moses had access to records which had been carefully preserved from earliest times. An educated Egyptian of the Exodus period surely would have been familiar with both the cuneiform of Mesopotamia and the hieroglyphs of Egypt. References to such source materials are found in the Bible itself. *E.g.*, in Num. 21:14-15, we find a quotation specifically said to have been taken from the "Book of the Wars of Jehovah." In Josh. 10:13 and in 2 Sam. 1:18, we find rather extensive quotations from what was called the "Book of Jashar," evidently a book of songs celebrating the glory of ancient Israel. Scholars are inclined to view the "Song of Lamech" (Gen. 4:23-24) as the first poem to have been incorporated in Scripture, after having been passed down from generation to generation, until inserted by Moses, under the guidance of the Spirit, into the Book of Genesis. Pfeiffer suggests that the Hebrew *toledoth*, used so frequently, "reflects the existence of genealogical tables or other materials which were in due time incorporated into Genesis."²²

2. Nor does the Mosaic authorship of the Pentateuch necessarily preclude explanatory names, words, and phrases ("interpolations") inserted by later writers. Again quoting Pfeiffer:

The recognition of the Mosaic authorship of the Pentateuch does not deny the possibility, or even probability of later editorial revision. Place names may be modernized in order to make them intelligible to a later generation. Joshua, the "minister" and successor of Moses, may have written the account of Moses' death recorded in the last chapter of Deuteronomy.

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The Jewish tradition of the part Ezra played in the preservation of Scripture may reflect a final editing after the return from Babylon.²³

The fact is that no human leader in all history ever took such a disorganized rabble as that which crossed the Red Sea, and left it, as did this reputedly meek man Moses, a nation that is still, after more than three millenia, a nation, a people separate, in all countries in which they flourish today. Such a man was surely the most eminently qualified person of his own time to give us the greatest book of his time, that which we know as the Torah or the Pentateuch.

I have no specific theory of inspiration to offer here, except to insist that the Divine inbreathing (revelation) in any age must have reference essentially to the truth that is communicated rather than to the *modus operandi* of the communication. We are all familiar, of course, with the power of suggestion by which thought may be communicated by one person to another, under hypnosis. Obviously, if the spirit of one human being can thus communicate thought (in words, to be sure) to the spirit of another human being, who can gainsay the possibility that the Spirit of God can communicate Divine thought (truth) to the spirit of man in the same manner? (Cf. Matt. 16:16-17, Acts 2:1-4, 1 Cor. 2:6-16, etc.). Inspiration must have reference especially to the authenticity and reliability of the end-product, the totality of truth embodied in any canonical book as it contributes to the Divine unfolding and human understanding of God's Eternal Purpose and Plan for the redemption of fallen man. (Eph. 1:3-14, 2:11-22, 3:1-12; Rom. 8:18-30; 1 Cor. 15:35-58, etc.).

The fact of the matter is that the Documentary Theory is a conglomeration of conjectures without benefit whatever of *external* evidence to support them. Indeed a fundamental weakness of the Theory is the fact that it is constructed generally on alleged *internal* "evidences." Not one of the critics ever manifested having the foggiest notion as

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to *who* the various authors and redactors of the different hypothetical Codes could have been, or as to *when* and *where*, with any degree of preciseness, the "authoring" and "redacting" was done. Moreover, the scholars who currently persist in clinging to the general framework of the Theory have modified it to such an extent that much of the groundwork on which it was based originally has been pulled out from under it, leaving it only a shell of what it was formerly.

Another important problem, in any careful evaluation of the Critical Theory, a problem which simply cannot be disregarded, is this: Why is the name of Jerusalem, the city of David, not to be found in all the Pentateuch (except possibly in the mention of Melchizedek as "king of Salem" in Gen. 14:18)? Is it conceivable that a succession of writers and redactors could have produced the Torah, after the time of David, without so much as a reference to their beloved city? Is it conceivable that they could have produced the books of the Torah at a late date, without mentioning Jerusalem, short of a deliberate conspiracy, entered into beforehand, to avoid the mention of the name? On this view, it is difficult, if not actually impossible, to explain how such a conspiracy of silence could have been deliberately formed and executed by a succession of writers and redactors, extending at least through several generations, most of whom surely were unknown to one another. Under such a theory, therefore, the fact of the unity of the Pentateuchal content becomes utterly amazing!

The following paragraphs from the pen of Dr. Merrill Unger constitute a kind of summary which is too meaningful to be overlooked:

The basic mistake of the critical theory on the subject of the determining principle of the formation of the Old Testament canon is the false pre-supposition that the Ancient Oracles were not written with the avowed purpose of being held sacred and divinely

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authoritative and obligatory from the start, but that in the course of centuries came to be treated with a veneration which was not at first granted them.

In some cases, it is true, it may have taken time for inspired writings to have been received and recognized as authoritative. But to postulate extended time periods, running into centuries, is totally unnecessary historically, and at variance with the internal evidence and tacit claims of the Scriptures themselves.²⁴

Finally, therefore, in this connection, we shall consider briefly what the Scriptures themselves have to say about the authorship of the Pentateuch. Note the following passages:

1. *From the Pentateuch itself.* Exo. 17:14, 24:4—Moses engages in writing in a book, literally, in *the* (already existing?) book. Exo. 24:7—Moses reads “the book of the covenant” in the hearing of the people. (The core of the Old Covenant was the Decalogue (Exo. 19:5, Deut. 5:1-21). Hence, we see no real reason for assuming that the titles, “book of the covenant” and “book of the law,” referred to separate books. Perhaps the designation, “book of the law,” was simply a more comprehensive term, designating the Torah as a whole, and hence came into more common use as the writing of the Torah was, little by little, brought to completeness by Moses, and then continued by his successor, Joshua. The Old Covenant, as every Bible student knows, was first made with the Patriarchs (Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob), and under Moses, at Sinai, it was amplified into a national covenant). Num. 33:1,2—Moses is writing the story of the journeyings of his people. Deut. 31:9,24,26—Moses completes “the writing of the words of this law in a book,” and this book he orders to be placed, by the Levitical priests, beside the ark of the covenant, that it might serve as a witness against them (the priests) as representatives of the nation; in the Holy of Holies this book was thus protected by the awesome majesty of God’s

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own presence. Note other references to the "book of the law" in Deut. 28:61, 29:21, 30:10. Note that the affirmations, "Jehovah spake unto Moses," "God said unto Moses," etc., occur repeatedly in Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers, and Deuteronomy, and especially in Leviticus. Note also Deut. 17:18—here it is enjoined upon the people by Moses (who is expressly called a prophet in Scripture: Deut. 18:15, 34:10; Acts 3:22-26, 7:37-40; John 1:21,25) that when they shall have taken possession of the Land of Promise and established a monarchy, each successive king "shall write him a copy of this law in a book," and shall "read therein all the days of his life." This seems to have been a feature of the coronation ceremonies (cf. 2 Ki. 11:12, Exo. 25:16, 2 Chron. 23:11). This surely indicates that several copies of the "book" in question were in existence, probably in the care of the priesthood exclusively, not long after the establishment of the monarchy, and probably long before that time (*i.e.*, in the time of Joshua and the Judges: the so-called "Judges" were in fact theocratic dictators).

2. *From the rest of the Old Testament books.* (1) Josh. 1:7,8—here Yahweh is represented as enjoining upon Joshua, Moses' successor, unceasing meditation on, and obedience to, all the provisions of "the book of the law," that is, "all the law which Moses, my servant, commanded thee." Josh. 24:26—here we read that Joshua added his own writing to the "book of the law." (2) Note other references to "the book of the law of Moses" (Josh. 8:31, 2 Ki. 14:6; Judg. 3:4, Neh. 8:8, Mal. 4:4), to "the book of Moses" (2 Chron. 25:4, 35:12; Ezra 6:18, Neh. 13:1), to "the book of the covenant" (Exo. 24:7, 2 Ki. 23:2, 23:21; 2 Chron. 34:30), etc. (3) We find also that as Joshua continued the writing (chronicles) after the death of Moses, so Samuel is said to have carried it on after the time of Joshua (1 Sam. 10:25). Moreover, Samuel was the founder of the "school" of the prophets which arose in such centers as Ramah, Bethel, Gilgal, Mizpah, Naioth, and probably other places

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(1 Sam. 3:20, 7:3, 7:15-17, 8:4, 9:9, 10:9-13, 19:18-24, 19:20-23, etc.). These centers of prophetic training continued to flourish throughout the entire period of the monarchy; in all likelihood, among those "schooled" at these places were Nathan, Elijah, Elisha, and many of the later prophets. We can readily see how the historical, prophetic, and classical books of the Old Testament canon came into existence. After the prophets, in the time of the Captivity and later, there arose a group of scholars specifically trained for studying and interpreting the ancient Hebrew manuscripts: these men were known as *scribes*.

(4) In 2 Sam., ch. 6, and 1 Chron., chs. 13 and 15, we find the story of David's bringing the ark of the covenant to Jerusalem. After being kept there throughout the rest of David's life, in a tent-like sanctuary, the ark was finally installed by Solomon in the Holy of Holies of the newly built Temple. We read that, at that time, there "was nothing in the ark save the two tables of stone which Moses put there at Horeb" (1 Ki. 8:9). What, then, had become of the "book" which Moses had turned over to Joshua, to be placed beside the ark of the covenant to be preserved and cherished by the priests, when Joshua had taken over the leadership of the children of Israel? This ancient book could have been lost in those chaotic centuries of the Conquest and the period of the Judges, and later in the early years of the monarchy when the ark was being bandied about, captured by the Philistines, then recaptured by the Israelites, before being hauled on a "new cart" (2 Sam. 6:3) to Jerusalem. But even if the original Mosaic document had been lost, certainly copies of it were extant. In the great reformation instituted by Hezekiah (who ruled about 715-687 B.C.), we are told that the king "clave to Jehovah" and "kept his commandments, which Jehovah commanded Moses" (2 Ki. 18:6,12; cf. 2 Chron. 30:16). After Hezekiah, however, there was another relapse into gross paganism.

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(5) At this point the most significant event of this period of decline occurred as described in 2 Kings, ch. 22, namely, the discovery of "the book of the law" in the rubbish of the Temple ("the house of Jehovah") by Hilkiyah the priest. What book was this—a book which made such a profound impression on Josiah the king, and through him, on the people? As the story goes, Hilkiyah took this book to Shaphan the scribe, who recognized it as the book of the law; the two, Hilkiyah and Shaphan, then took the book to Josiah the king, and read it to him; "and when the king heard the words of the book of the law, he rent his clothes" (v. 11). But King Josiah wanted to be sure about the identity of this book and so he sent Hilkiyah and Shaphan and others of his court, to show the book to Huldah, the prophetess; and Huldah immediately accepted it as the book of the law. A great reformation ensued, as had occurred previously under Hezekiah. The finding of this book caused consternation throughout all Judah; the king commanded a national fast in sackcloth and ashes, after reading to the assembled people "the words of the book of the covenant which was found in the house of Jehovah" (2 Ki. 23:2). (Note the use interchangeably of the two designations, "book of the law" and "book of the covenant.") What was this book? Was it really the Deuteronomic Code? If the book was a "pious fraud," as the critics have assumed, certainly all these leaders of the nation were either privy to it, or were "taken in" by the deception. *Or—was this book which Hilkiyah found in the rubbish of the Temple the ancient writing, the Torah (or a very early copy of it) which had been turned over to Joshua by Moses himself, the original book of the law in the great Lawgiver's own hand?* If so, no wonder the book brought about such an upheaval in the form of a nation-wide spiritual reformation: it was the voice of Yahweh speaking out of the hoary past!

(6) There seems to be no question, even among the critics, that the "book of the law of Moses" which Ezra

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read to the people, in the restoration of the Theocracy after the return from the Captivity, was the Torah substantially as we have it today. (Cf. Ezra 6:18, 7:6; Neh. 8:1-8, 9:3, 13:1.)

3. *From the books of the New Testament canon.* Note the following passages especially: Matt. 8:4; cf. Lev. 13:49, 14:2ff. Matt. 19:7,8; Mark 10:1-4; cf. Deut. 24:1-4. Mark 7:10; cf. Exo. 20:12, Deut. 5:16, Exo. 21:17, Lev. 20:9. Mark 7:10; cf. Exo. 3:6. Mark 12:26; Luke 2:22, John 1:17, 5:45-47, 7:19, 7:23; Acts 13:39, 15:5, 28:23; 2 Cor. 3:15; Gal. 3:10; Heb. 10:28, etc. Note also the passages listed below, referring to "the law and the prophets," "Moses and the prophets," "the book of Moses," etc. At this point, we may summarize with a well-known passage from the Talmud, as follows: "Moses received the book of the law from Sinai, and delivered it to Joshua; Joshua delivered it to the elders, and the elders to the prophets, and the prophets to the men of the Great Synagogue, from whom it passed to the heads of the families of the scribes." This is the testimony of what is perhaps the highest Jewish authority.

VIII. THE DETERMINATION OF THE OLD TESTAMENT CANON

1. *The Prophets.* We have already noted that The Law (Torah) was venerated as the oldest and most sacred of the Hebrew Scriptures, that The Prophets were next, and The Writings last, in ecclesiastical and popular esteem. We now ask, When did the complete collection known as The Prophets become canonized? And when did the collection known as The Writings become canonized?

The Great Synagogue is said to have been an assembly of outstanding Jewish leaders (scribes, priests, prophets) whom Ezra the Scribe selected to assist him in the restoration of the Theocracy. Ezra himself was the head. Hence Jewish tradition has persisted in the claim that Ezra and his collaborators collected all the Jewish sacred writings,

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edited and revised and transcribed them, and thus established the Old Testament canon as we now have it, that is, as it came to exist as the Hebrew Scriptures, consisting of The Law, The Prophets, and The Writings.

Let us now consider passages from the teaching of Christ and His Spirit-guided Apostles which throw light on this question.

(1) Note the following references to "the law and the prophets," "Moses and the prophets," "the book of Moses," "the book of the prophets," etc.: Matt. 5:17, 7:12, 11:13, 22:40; Luke 16:16, 16:29-31; Luke 24:27; Mark 12:26; Acts 7:42, 24:14, 28:23; Rom. 3:21. (2) Note Acts 13:15—here we have a description of the synagogue service in New Testament times (cf. Acts 15:21).

(3) Luke 16:16—The Law and The Prophets were in existence until John (the Baptizer); but beginning with John the Gospel of the Kingdom (the Reign of Messiah) was proclaimed (as in preparation, "at hand," Matt. 3:2, throughout the personal ministry of Jesus; and as fact beginning with Pentecost and the establishment of the Church, Acts 1:1-8, Acts 2). Luke 24:27—beginning from Moses and from all The Prophets, Jesus expounded the Scriptures to the two disciples on the road to Emmaus. Acts 13:15—it was The Law and The Prophets that was customarily read in the worship of the Synagogue in Antioch of Pisidia. Acts 15:21—"from generations of old" it was the custom in every Synagogue to read from Moses on the Sabbath day. Luke 4:17-21: It was by reading from the prophet Isaiah in the Synagogue at Nazareth that Jesus announced the beginning of His ministry. From these Scriptures it seems obvious that The Law and The Prophets was the designation for the Hebrew Scriptures at the beginning of the Christian era.

(4) Note the evidence that the Old Testament prophets had committed their messages to writing before the old (Mosaic) Dispensation had come to an end. Isa. 8:16—

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“Bind thou up the testimony, seal the law among my disciples.” Ezekiel (38:17) quotes words which God had spoken by the prophets of old. As noted heretofore, the books of Joshua, Judges, Samuel, and Kings are classed as prophetic books, largely, it would seem because they give us the story of the earlier prophets, namely, Nathan, Samuel, Ahijah, Elijah, Elisha, etc. Each of the writers whom we know specifically as the Hebrew prophets, beginning with Isaiah and ending with Malachi, has put his own imprimatur on his writing by some such introductory phrase or statement as the following: “the vision of Isaiah, the son of Amos” (Isa. 1:1), “the word of Jehovah came unto me” (Jer. 1:4), “the word of Jehovah came expressly to Ezekiel” (Ezek. 1:3), “thus saith Jehovah” (Amos 1:3), “the vision of Obadiah: thus saith the Lord Jehovah” (Obad. 1:1), or the formula most commonly used. “the word of Jehovah came unto Jonah” (Jon. 1:1), etc. These men all belonged to the age of revelation which ended with Malachi, only to be resumed at the proper time by the last of the great prophetic line, John the Baptizer. Incidentally the references in the apostolic writings to the prophetic books of the Old Testament are too numerous to mention here. We can surely affirm, from all the evidence produced here, that the New Testament designation for the sacred books of the Hebrew people was The Law and the Prophets. This does not necessarily mean, however, that there were no other sacred books extant.

2. *The Writings*. What evidence have we as to the time of the canonization of The Writings as sacred Scripture?

(1) Let us start with Luke 24:44—“written in the law of Moses, and the prophets, and the Psalms” (concerning Messiah). This would seem to indicate that the Psalms (the nucleus of The Writings) were considered as separate from The Prophets, at the time of Jesus’ incarnate ministry. (The Psalms are quoted repeatedly in the New Testament as Holy Scriptures: cf. Matt. 4:6, 21:6, 22:44; Mark 12:10,

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36; Luke 20:17,42; John 2:17, 10:34, 15:25, 19:24, 19:36-37; Acts 1:20, 2:25-28, 2:34-35, 4:11, 4:25-26, 13:2, 13:35; Rom. 3:4, 3:10-18, 4:7, 10:18, 15:3,11; 1 Cor. 3:20, 15:27; 2 Cor. 5:12, 9:9; Eph. 4:8,26; Heb. 1:5,7,8,10,13; 2:6,12; 3:7,15; 4:3,5,7; 5:5,6; 7:17,21; 10:5-7, 13:6; 1 Pet. 3:10-12.) (2) Note also references to the Book of Daniel in Matt. 24:15 and in Mark 13:14 (cf. Dan. 9:27, 11:31, 12:11, also 1 Maccabees 1:54, 6:7.) Note also the numerous reflections of the language of Daniel in the book of Revelation; according to Goodspeed there are no less than sixty-six of these.²⁵ Obviously, Daniel is a prophetic book. Yet there is no evidence that it was ever included in The Prophets; rather, it was included in The Writings. (3) In the Apocryphal book of 2 Maccabees, ch. 2, v. 13, we read that Nehemiah founded a library, "gathering together the books about the kings and prophets, and the things of David," etc. In this context, the phrase, "the things of David," must have had reference to the Davidic writings (the Psalms). This would indicate that the Psalms were extant at the time of Nehemiah, as far back as the middle of the fourth century B.C.

(4) In this connection, the Apocryphal book of *Ecclesiasticus* provides some significant information. In the Prologue to this interesting book, the grandson of one Jesus ben Sirach tells of his coming into Egypt "in the eight and thirtieth year of Euergetes the king" (132 B.C.) and finding a copy of the book (*Ecclesiasticus*) which was written by his grandfather, which he proceeded to translate into Greek. In the Prologue, the translator speaks of "the many and great things" which had been delivered unto the Jews "by the law and the prophets, and by the others that had followed in their steps." He states that his grandfather had been much given to "the reading of the law, and the prophets, and the other books of our fathers," and comments on the difficulty of translating "the law itself, and the prophecies, and the rest of the books," into other languages. In

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chs. 44-50 of the book, by the grandfather, Jesus ben Sirach, the author gives us the roll of the famous men of Israel, one of the most eloquent passages in religious literature. He lists the heroes of the faith, not only those of the five books of Moses (The Law), but also those of the historical-prophetic books (The Prophets), and lists them in the order in which they appear in the divisions named. In ch. 49, there is an obvious reference to the book of the "twelve prophets" (v. 10). He concludes the list with the name of Simon the high priest, son of Onias, who, he tells us, in his (Simon's) lifetime, repaired the house and strengthened the temple. Throughout this entire chapter 50, he eulogizes Simon. Now this Simon lived about 200 B.C. This means that Jesus ben Sirach lived about 180 B.C., and was already familiar with The Law and The Prophets. What, then, did the translator, the grandson, mean by "the rest of the books"? He does not tell us what these books were, nor does he mention the term, The Writings. However, it is clear, from this evidence, that by the second century B.C., there was extant, in addition to The Law and The Prophets, a growing body of writings that was being regarded as canonical, as an integral part of the sacred literature of the Jews.

(5) We shall now call up another witness, Josephus, the Jewish historian, who lived about A.D. 37-100. In one of his works, Josephus states that the Jews had only 22 sacred books. He arrives at this figure by reckoning Judges and Ruth as one book, and Jeremiah and Lamentations as one book. He elaborates by stating that there were the five books of Moses, the thirteen books of The Prophets (among which he included Daniel, Job, Chronicles, Ezra-Neemiah, and Esther); "the remaining four books," he adds, "contain hymns to God, and precepts for the conduct of human life." He then goes on to say:

... how firmly we have given credit to these books of our own nation, is evident by what we do; for during

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so many ages as have already passed, no one hath been so bold as either to add anything to them, to take any thing from them, or to make any change in them; but it is become natural to all Jews, immediately and from their very birth, to esteem these books to contain divine doctrines, and to persist in them, and, if occasion be, willingly to die for them.²⁶

Certainly this indicates that by the time of Josephus the books included in The Writings were regarded as fixed because the total number of books in the entire Hebrew canon was so regarded.

When, therefore, was the list of The Writings permanently determined? Crushed by the tragic siege and destruction of their holy City and Temple and by the Dispersion of the whole nation, and no doubt disturbed by the rapid spread of Christianity, an authoritative Council of Jewish rabbis and scholars was called at Jamnia, A.D. 90, in Palestine (near Jaffa and not far from the Great Sea), for the purpose of establishing the Canon of the Hebrew Scriptures as an act necessary to the preservation of their faith. At this Council, we are told, the question was discussed whether the *Song of Songs* or *Ecclesiastes* "defiled the hands." What did this phrase mean? It meant just this: A genuine book of Scripture was regarded as so holy that when a man touched it, his hands were sanctified and were not to be used for ordinary purposes until they had been washed or "de-sanctified," just as by touching a corpse the hands became regarded as so unholy and defiled that washing (ceremonial cleansing) was necessary. (A modern analogy of this, from the viewpoint of science, rather than that of magic or superstition, is the germ theory.) All this means, then, that this question with respect to the two books named was still undecided, as late as A.D. 90. However, it must also be understood, as one writer puts it so clearly that

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the Councils of Jamnia (A.D. 90, 118) composed of Jewish scholars, did not settle on the canon; rather, they discussed the problem of leaving certain books in the canon that were already there. Public opinion had determined the books in the Old Testament before the scholars met to discuss them. Book after book found acceptance by the people as they sifted them out from the mass of material available, on the basis of how the books agreed with God's past revelation and met the needs of the human soul. Thus God guided the formation of the canon as surely as He inspired the writers of its books.²⁷

It seems to this writer that it may be taken as established that the entire canon of the Hebrew Scriptures had been established even before the beginning of the Christian era.

VI. THE SEPTUAGINT AND THE APOCRYPHA

The oldest version of the Old Testament extant is the Septuagint (LXX), more than two thousand manuscripts of which have been catalogued from the second to the sixteenth centuries. This, according to the Letter of Aristeas of Cyprus to his brother, Philocrates (a third century B.C. document) was the translation of the Hebrew Old Testament into Greek by some seventy-two Jewish scholars who were brought from Palestine to Alexandria specifically for that task, by Ptolemy II Philadelphus (who reigned 285-246 B.C.). This translation was begun in Ptolemy's reign; however, the exact date of the completion of the work is not well established. However, the LXX does contain all the books of the Old Testament which we have today, and was itself included in the *Hexapla*, the monumental work of Origen, who lived about A.D. 185-251. There is no evidence that the Apocryphal books were ever included in the Hebrew Scriptures, although they did make their way into the Septuagint which became literally the Old Testament of the early Christian Church.

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The fourteen Apocryphal books are generally regarded as non-canonical for the simple reason that they contribute nothing to the unfolding of the divine Plan of Redemption or to the demonstration of the Messiahship of Jesus. These books are usually classed as historical (I Esdras, I Maccabees, II Maccabees), didactic (Wisdom of Solomon, Ecclesiasticus), prophetic (Baruch, II Esdras), "religious romance" (Tobit, Judith) or "legendary" (Prayer of Manasses, The Remainder of Esther, Song of the Three Holy Children, History of Susanna, Bel and the Dragon). For the most part these books reflect the thought and life of the Jewish people characteristic of the interim between the Testaments, that is, in the period from Malachi to John the Baptizer. Though never included in the original Hebrew Scriptures, the Apocryphal books became associated, by Greek-speaking Jews in Egypt, with the translated Old Testament books, and hence came to be included in the Greek Old Testament (used by the early Christian Church), the so-called Septuagint.

The Vulgate of Jerome, the monk of Bethlehem, was a translation into Latin of the original Hebrew Scriptures, completed about A.D. 405. Jerome did not accept the Apocryphal books as canonical; he did, however, translate *Judith* and *Tobit*. The other twelve were added to the Vulgate later, and hence through the influence of the LXX, were included in the Douai Bible of the Roman Catholic Church, and in many of the early Protestant Bibles. They have been omitted from all recent non-Catholic revisions and versions.

(For the student who wishes to examine in some detail the history of the Septuagint, the following works are recommended: The *Cambridge Septuagint* text, edited by H. B. Swete, 3 vols., 1887-1894, Cambridge University Press; *An Introduction to the Old Testament in Greek*, by H. B. Swete, revised edition by Ottley, Cambridge, 1914; M. Hadas, *Aristeas to Philocrates*, Harpers, New York,

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1951; and especially *The Septuagint Bible*, "Foreword" and "Introduction," Charles Thomson translation, published by the Falcon's Wing Press, Indian Hills, Colorado, 1954. Thomson, an eminent Greek Scholar, was Secretary to the Continental Congress, 1774-1789.)

REVIEW QUESTIONS ON PART ONE

1. What is the origin of the word *Bible*?
2. In what sense is the Bible a library of books?
3. In what sense is the Bible a library of related books?
4. In what sense is the Bible a collection of selected books?
5. By what criterion are the books of the Bible accepted as canonical?
6. Explain the terms: Apocrypha, Pseudepigrapha.
7. In what sense is the Bible the Book of the Spirit?
8. In what sense is the Bible *one* book?
9. Name the three Dispensations of God's redemptive Plan, and state the extent of each.
10. In what book do we find the history of the Patriarchal Dispensation?
11. In what sense is the Bible pre-eminently the Book of Life?
12. In what sense is the Bible the world's Manual of Civilization?
13. State what the Bible is not designed to be, in God's purpose.
14. We find the history of what particular genealogical Line in the Bible?
15. What in particular were the Hebrew people "elected" to do in the unfolding of God's Eternal Purpose?
16. In what sense is the Bible *not* a book of philosophy?
17. What is the over-all theme of the Bible?
18. How many books in the Old Testament? In the New Testament? In the whole Bible?

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19. Classify and name the books of the Old Testament in our English Bible.
20. Classify and name the books of the New Testament in our English Bible.
21. What are the three general divisions of the Hebrew Scriptures?
22. Name the books of The Law, as given in the Hebrew Scriptures.
23. Name the books of The Prophets, as given in the Hebrew Scriptures.
24. Name the books of The Writings, as given in the Hebrew Scriptures.
25. What does the word *genesis* mean?
26. Cite the passages in Genesis that prove the book to be Christ-centered.
27. What is the preferred method of sectioning Genesis? On the basis of what Hebrew word are the sections best determined? What does the word mean?
28. Explain what is meant by the Lower Criticism. By the Higher Criticism.
29. What is the Pentateuch? What does the word mean?
30. State briefly the so-called Documentary Theory of the Pentateuch.
31. On what specific claims is the Documentary Theory based?
32. What specific arguments that were offered to support the Documentary Theory in its early days are now disproved by archaeology?
33. With what presuppositions did the advocates of the Documentary Theory approach their analysis of the Pentateuch?
34. What, generally, does the phrase, "destructive criticism" mean?
35. In what way have the modern Biblical critics made use of the "evolution" norm?

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36. What is meant by the phrase, "literary fabrication"?
37. In what sense is the Documentary Theory of the origin of Deuteronomy to be regarded as a "pious fraud"?
38. What has Dr. Albright said about this device of "literary fabrication"?
39. State what the Mosaic authorship of the Pentateuch does not necessarily exclude.
40. How account for the absence of the name of Jerusalem from the Pentateuch?
41. What, according to Dr. Unger, is the basic fallacy in the Documentary Theory?
42. What evidence concerning the authorship of the Pentateuch is provided by the Pentateuch itself?
43. What evidence concerning the authorship of the Pentateuch is provided by the rest of the Old Testament?
44. What evidence concerning the authorship of the Pentateuch is provided by the New Testament books?
45. What evidence do we have about the determination of the canon of The Prophets?
46. What evidence do we have about the determination of the canon of The Writings?
47. What important evidence concerning the canon of The Writings do we get from the Apocryphal book of Ecclesiasticus?
48. What evidence is contributed by Josephus about this problem?
49. What is the Septuagint? What evidence does it provide about the determination of the Old Testament canon?
50. Why are the books of the Apocrypha generally regarded as non-canonical?
51. How did the Apocrypha come to be included in the Septuagint?
52. What is the Vulgate? When, where, by whom, and from what sources was it produced?
53. What was the Council of Jamnia? When was it held, and for what purpose?

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54. What did this Council do with respect to the Old Testament canon?

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