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GENUINE AND COUNTERFEIT CHRISTIANITY

Among the extra-canonical sayings ascribed to Jesus, best entitled to be regarded as genuine, is the saying, "Show yourselves approved money-changers." Many of the Church fathers made use of this saying to explain the words, "Prove all things: hold fast that which is good," believing that underlying both exhortations is the figure of a money-changer testing the coins submitted to him to ascertain whether they are genuine or counterfeit. Whether or not this saying was an actual utterance of Jesus, and was present to Paul's mind when he penned his well-known exhortation, it directs attention to a qualification much needed by Christians today.

It may seem strange, passing strange, that nearly two thousand years after the death of Christ men should be discussing the question, What is Christianity? None the less the question is being everywhere debated; and the most divergent answers given and passionately defended, even among those calling themselves Christians. So-called liberal Christians, as a rule, define Christianity as "the religion of Jesus," meaning the religion that Jesus taught and practised, and so value Him exclusively as teacher and example. So-called conservative Christians, however, define Christianity as the religion that has Jesus as its object, and while yielding to none in their esteem of Him as teacher and example yet value Him most of all as Lord and Redeemer. Who is right? Among individuals having more or less of a following, we find that Royce identified Christianity with the sentiment of loyalty, that Sabatier held it to be only a high form of altruism, that Macintosh of the Yale Divinity School says it is nothing but morality of a Christ-like

THE CONFLICT OVER THE OLD TESTAMENT*

In a recent number of the *British Weekly*¹ there appeared an article by Professor George Jackson of Manchester which has been the occasion of considerable discussion, both favorable and otherwise, in subsequent issues of that journal. Professor Jackson calls attention to a remarkable situation in England: "on the one hand, a general acceptance of the results of Old Testament Criticism by the teachers of the Christian Church, and on the other, a widespread ignorance or fear of them by the great multitude of the Church's members." He declares that as far as England is concerned "the battle is over," leading scholars of all evangelical denominations being in the ranks of the critics. He names eight as typical² and asserts that "there are no names to set over against these." Yet he makes the remarkable admission: "We are afraid it is no exaggeration to say that probably five-sixths of the Old Testament teaching given in the Sunday-schools of this country last Sunday [he is speaking of England] was based on the presuppositions of fifty or a hundred years ago." This situation Professor Jackson considers especially deplorable because the old view, according to which a Christian is commonly supposed "to stand committed to the truth of everything in the Old Testament" has cost the Church, he believes, the adherence of many earnest seekers after truth who stumble, as Henry Drummond's correspondence shows that men of a generation ago stumbled, at "its discrepancies, its rigorous laws, its pitiless tempers, its open treatment of sexual questions, the atrocities which are narrated by its histories and sanctioned

* An address delivered by the author in Miller Chapel, October 10, 1922, on the occasion of his Inauguration as Assistant Professor of Semitic Philology, and now published with some revision and the addition of footnotes.

¹ July 13, 1922.

² Viz. Drs. Driver, Ottley, Skinner, G. A. Smith, Bennett, Wheeler Robinson, Peake, and Lofthouse.

by its laws."^{2a} He sees in the "new knowledge" which criticism has given us "one of God's best gifts to this generation"; maintains that "never before has the Old Testament been so intelligible, so readable, so 'preachable' a book as it has become in the hands of Christian scholars"; and regards it as the great task of the leaders of the Church to make this new knowledge accessible to those who, as he sadly confesses, are either "ignorant" or "afraid" of it.

In view of the fact that Professor Jackson quotes so competent a judge as Dr. Hastings, the editor of the numerous dictionaries which bear his name, as saying that "in the United States of America a great upheaval is at hand over the Old Testament," our subject may be regarded as a most timely one. And I shall ask you to consider with me whether it is true that "never before has the Old Testament been so intelligible, so readable, so 'preachable' a book" as the critics claim to have made it, that we may be able to judge whether there is warrant for the claim that the "new knowledge" should be regarded as "one of God's best gifts to this generation,"—a gift which it is our duty to receive with gratitude and share with all mankind.

Never before so preachable! This is a startling assertion. A few moments ago there was read in your hearing an account of the first and in some respects at least the most successful sermon ever preached by a follower of Christ.³ The account which is given to us is brief. Luke devotes only about twenty-two verses to Peter's sermon at Pentecost, adding two verses to tell us how Peter gave the "invitation to come forward," as the modern evangelist might say, and telling us that "with many other words did he testify and exhort, saying save yourselves from this untoward generation." Now what is the most striking thing about this sermon of twenty-two verses as reported by Luke?

^{2a} Prof. Jackson's authority for this statement is Drummond's biographer, Prof. G. A. Smith (*Modern Criticism and the Preaching of the O. T.*, p. 28).

³ Acts ii. 1-36 was the Scripture Lesson read as a part of the opening exercises.

It is this, the prominence it gives to the Old Testament. Indeed, the "report" consists very largely of citations from it and comments thereon. We have first a five verse quotation from Joel, with a verse of introduction. This passage is briefly (in three verses) applied to the death and resurrection of Christ. Then follows a four verse citation from the 16th Psalm, which is expounded by Peter as fulfilled in Christ's death and resurrection; and Peter adds a second quotation from the Psalms, in this instance from the 110th, to clinch his argument. This would seem to indicate that Peter on the day of Pentecost found the Old Testament Scriptures quite a 'preachable' book. Professor Jackson tells us that with the new light which Criticism has shed upon it, the Old Testament is more preachable than ever. We are fortunately in a position to test this statement as applied to Peter's speech. For we have now two accounts of this sermon. We have the "old" account given us by Luke; and we have the "new" version of the Higher Critics as contained in the *Shorter New Testament*, the chief editor of which was Professor Kent of Yale, an Old Testament critic of recognized ability and one who has been engaged for years in what Professor Jackson considers to be the great task of today, popularizing the results of Criticism. It should be especially instructive, therefore, to know how Professor Kent, an authority on the new knowledge which makes the Old Testament so much more preachable than hitherto, "reports" Peter's speech for us.⁴

We notice in the first place that the quotation from Joel is reduced, in the *Shorter New Testament*, from five verses to two. Evidently Peter made a mistake in using such a long citation! The relevant part of Joel's prediction is contained, it would seem, in the first two verses; and the last three in which the language is apparently regarded as too "apoca-

⁴ It should be especially instructive, because the aim of the editors is stated to be "to single out and set in logical and as far as possible in chronological order those parts of the Bible which are of vital interest and practical value to the present age" (Preface of *Shorter Bible—New Testament*).

lyptic," to appeal to the sober judgment of thoughtful men is omitted. Then we discover that both of the quotations from the Psalms are eliminated, and all of the comment which refers directly to them. Why is this? The reason is obvious. Luke represents Peter as having made these quotations from the Psalms on the assumption that David was their author, and that the language which he used is so manifestly inapplicable to himself that it may properly be regarded as referring to Christ in whom it has a remarkable fulfilment. But, it is one of the surest results of that "new knowledge" which is so highly valued by Professor Jackson that, "there are no Psalms certainly or even probably Davidic," but that "The Psalter as a whole presumably belongs to the Second Temple and even to the later history of that Temple."⁵ Consequently Professor Kent deems it advisable to delete these references to, and arguments based upon the Psalms. As a result the Old Testament citations are reduced from about eleven verses to two, while the entire speech is 'shortened' to less than half its New Testament compass. It follows, then, that whether or not the Old Testament is more preachable than ever, Peter at any rate did not know how to preach it, and most of what he says about it would better be omitted. And if an Apostle cannot be relied on to preach it properly, is it surprising that many a Christian minister, who has accepted the new knowledge should show very great caution and hesitancy in using his Old Testament and be careful to avoid giving the "unscholarly" impression that he is appealing to it as authoritative?

This example of the application of the "new knowledge" is noteworthy for several reasons. It not merely has an important bearing upon the question of the preachableness of the Old Testament. It shows with equal clearness how close and vital is the relation between the Old Testament and the New, and how different is the modern critic's

⁵ Peake's *Commentary*, p. 368. The section on the "Psalms" is by the late Prof. W. E. Addis.

estimate of the Old Testament from that of the founders of the Christian Church.

Let us now examine a little further into the character of this new knowledge. Principal Joyce writing in "Dr. Peake's great Commentary on the Bible,"⁶ as Professor Jackson styles it (a book from which frequent quotations will be made, because it is largely representative of the present conclusions of the critics⁷ and because it is one of the most ambitious attempts thus far made to popularize the results of critical study of the Bible), makes this rather startling statement: "Externally and to a superficial observer it may well have seemed that, even in the times of the Monarchy, the religion of Israel was distinguishable only in certain minor points from the religion of the neighboring tribes."⁸ This statement is a little general. Professor Henry Preserved Smith tells us regarding the religion of Israel in the days of Moses, "Except that he [Yahweh] was more powerful, he did not differ essentially from Chemosh of Moab . . ."⁹ Chemosh, you will recall, is spoken of in the Old Testament as "the abomination of Moab." And you will also recall that one of the religious practices in the worship of "the neighboring tribes," which was responsible for his being called the abomination of Moab, was human sacrifice, "causing their sons to pass through the fire." Dr. Whitehouse tells us that among "the darker aspects of sacrifice belonging to the primitive period of Canaanite and Hebrew life was *infant sacrifice*"¹⁰ to which we have an allusion in one of the

⁶ *A Commentary on the Bible*, edited by Arthur S. Peake, M.A., D.D., Rylands Professor of Biblical Exegesis in the University of Manchester; Professor in Hartley College, Manchester. New York: Thomas Nelson & Sons, 1920 [cited simply as PEAKE].

⁷ Five of the eight leading scholars named by Prof. Jackson were contributors to this Commentary: Bennett, Lofthouse, Peake, Wheeler Robinson, and Skinner.

⁸ PEAKE, p. 428. Principal Joyce is discussing "Old Testament Prophecy," and his reference is to the pre-prophetic religion of Israel as "reconstructed" by the critics.

⁹ *Religion of Israel*, p. 61.

¹⁰ Prof. Whitehouse here refers to Prof. Jordan's sketch of "The

earliest codes (Ex. xxii. 29f.), where it is enacted that the human first born as well as of oxen and flocks are to be offered to Yahweh."¹¹ The passage referred to reads as follows: "Thou shalt not delay to offer the first of thy ripe fruits, and of thy liquors: the first born of thy sons shalt thou give unto me. Likewise shalt thou do with thine oxen and with thy sheep." Canon Harford in discussing this law remarks: "It is not said here (vs. 29b) how the offering of first born boys was to be made,¹² but the obvious analogy of the firstlings (vs. 30, "give me," as vs. 29b) suggests that the form at least of the law goes back to the time when children were actually sacrificed (cf. Gen. 22)."¹³ Do you

Religion of Israel" (PEAKE, p. 8iff.), where the question is asked, Was human sacrifice ever a part of Hebrew religion? and answered in part as follows: "It certainly does not belong to the religion of Yahweh, and never receives the sanction of any prophet. Hebrew religion first modified and then banished this ancient widespread and barbarous custom." This statement seems at first sight to conflict with that of Prof. Whitehouse. The explanation is that Prof. Jordan does not regard this law of Exod. xxii. as normative of Yahweh's religion, or at least of the higher Yahwism of the Prophets (see below).

¹¹ PEAKE, p. 99.

¹² Here Canon Harford refers to Exod. xiii. 12f. which the critics assign to the document J (the Book of the Covenant being "unanimously" assigned to E) and which expressly states: "and all the firstborn of man among thy children shalt thou redeem"—a statement which anyone not committed to the theory of separate documents in the Pentateuch would naturally regard as proving conclusively that the meaning assigned by the critics to xxii. 29 is unwarranted, for the reason that this verse is to be interpreted in terms of xiii. 12.

¹³ PEAKE, p. 187. This statement takes the middle ground between the two opposing views advanced by critical scholars. On the one hand we have Stade, Loisy and Arch. Duff, who find here a definite requirement that the first-born son be sacrificed to Jehovah. Stade tells us that the Book of the Covenant (in which this law is found) demands this "quite bluntly" ("ganz unverblümt," *Geschichte*, p. 634), and refers to this verse as proof. Loisy in contrasting this verse with xiii. 12 gives it as his opinion that "the text in itself does not provide for this substitution, and one may add excludes it" (*Religion of Israel*, p. 166); he even finds a reference to this law in Ezek. xx. 25f. (*Le Sacrifice*, p. 232). Duff does not hesitate to connect it directly with Moses: "This rule to sacrifice every first-born is, therefore, a very old one, and pictures doubtless exactly the old Mosaic worship" (*Hints on O. T. Theology*, p. 161f). J. Estlin Carpenter apparently favors

recall who is said to be responsible for both the form and the contents of this law? The Bible tells us that this law formed a part of the Judgments which Jehovah gave to Moses at Mt. Sinai to set before the people!

It is the view of Wellhausen on the other hand that, according to the clear teaching of the prophets of the eighth and seventh centuries, sacrifice had no Mosaic authorization.¹⁴ Consequently the critic has this advantage that he need not attribute his law¹⁵ of infant sacrifice to Moses, but may regard it as representing very largely what Professor Burney calls "the consuetudinary legislation of Canaan in the pre-Mosaic period."¹⁶ The critics have found it com-
 this interpretation (*Composition of the Pentateuch*, p. 223). He cites Baudissin as regarding Exod. xxxiv. 20 as a "modification" of xxii. 29b. Baudissin's words are, "This is clearly an explanation, perhaps a modification of the Book of the Covenant" (*Einleitung*, p. 131). The view that "redemption" is a "modification" of the original rigor of the law is also strongly urged by J. G. Frazer, who claims the support of Nöldeke for it (*The Dying God*, p. 179). On the other hand, Wellhausen regards the claim on the human first-born not as "primitive" but as "a later generalization," and points out that there are "no traces of so enormous a blood tax, but, on the contrary, many of a great preference for eldest sons" (*Proleg.* p. 88). Smend denies that the wording of Exod. xxii. 29 favors the interpretation of Stade, which he declares would be "in most violent conflict with the spirit of the Book of the Covenant" (*Lehrb. d. A. T. Religionsgesch.*, p. 276). Addis calls it a "misinterpretation" (*Hebrew Religion*, p. 42f.). Still there seems to be quite a tendency, even on the part of those who agree with Wellhausen that the sacrifice of the first-born could never have been customary in Israel, to admit that the law in question is probably connected in some way with the ancient Semitic custom of human sacrifice (cf. Robertson Smith, *Religion of the Semites*, p. 464) and that this view is favored by the phraseology, or as Canon Harford calls it the "form," of the law (cf. Baentsch, *Exodus* pp. 89f. 203; Driver, *Exodus*, pp. 235, 470f.; S. A. Cook, *Encyc. Bib.*, col. 1526).

¹⁴ In commenting on Micah vi. 6, Wellhausen says: "It is no new matter, but, a thing well known, that sacrifices are not what the Torah of the Lord contains" (*Proleg.* p. 58).

¹⁵ It is only proper to speak of it as "his" law, for he seems to have discovered it. It has remained apparently for modern critical scholarship to make a discovery of which previous generations of Bible students were blissfully ignorant.

¹⁶ *The Book of Judges*, p. 329f. This contention of Prof. Burney's illustrates how radically the critics differ among themselves even on

paratively easy to interpret the fiery denunciations pronounced by the prophets upon a purely external or mechanical conception of sacrifice as a minimizing of the value of sacrifice as such, and even as an absolute rejection of it as altogether meaningless and wrong. Thus Professor Peake tells us: "The prophets do not attack sacrifice in itself so much as sacrifice divorced from morality: yet their tone suggests that they attach very little intrinsic value to the ritual of sacrifice."¹⁷ Professor Kennett goes much further. Notice what he says: "Thus, whereas, the great prophets of the eighth and seventh centuries repudiated all sacrifice, the compromising school of reformers represented by Josiah and his advisers found it necessary to insist on attendance at the great religious feasts . . ." The bearing of these

questions of vital importance to their hypothesis. He regards the Book of the Covenant as representing very largely "the consuetudinary legislation of Canaan" as observed by such Israelitish tribes as were never in Egypt and did not come under the influence of Moses (cf. PEAKE, p. 169: "It is unlikely on several grounds that all the tribes were in Egypt"). Yet the Book of the Covenant is "unanimously" assigned by the critics, including Prof. Burney, to the document E, which the "overwhelming majority of scholars since Wellhausen" attribute to a man of the Northern Kingdom, and hence regard as an "Ephraimitic narrative." Unless "Ephraimitic" is a tragic misnomer it should imply that E is par excellence *the* document of the Joseph tribes, which according to Prof. Burney are the very ones which were in Egypt and did come under the influence and leadership of Moses. Dr. Driver flatly contradicts Prof. Burney by saying: "It is reasonable to suppose that the teaching of Moses on these subjects ["civil ordinances" and "ceremonial observances"] is preserved in its least modified form in the Decalogue and the Book of the Covenant" (*Introd.* p. 152f.).—Loisy thinks the Hebrews did not practice human sacrifice in the desert, but learned it from the Canaanites. On the other hand Bertholet sees in "the abomination of the Egyptians" referred to in Exod. viii. 26 an allusion to this practice and remarks: "Because the Egyptians want to prevent Israel from offering their human first-born, they must pay the penalty with their own" (*Kulturgesch.*, p. 100)—a statement which recalls Wellhausen's remark, "Because Pharaoh refuses to allow the Hebrews to offer to their God the firstlings of cattle that are His due, Jehovah seizes from him the first-born of men" (*Proleg.*, p. 88), but is far more offensive.

¹⁷ PEAKE, p. 437; cf. p. 95.

words is made still clearer by the following, “. . . Haggai’s zeal for sacrifice seems retrograde in comparison with the teaching of the pre-exilic prophets . . .”¹⁸ It is plain that Professor Kennett regards sacrifice as “primitive,” and Haggai’s insistence upon it as “retrograde.”¹⁹

Now let us consider the New Testament inference from this critical conclusion regarding the Old Testament. Dr. Barton has drawn it for us very clearly: “So far as western Asia is concerned it was left for early Christianity to inaugurate a religion entirely without such sacrifice, and then the author of the Epistle to the Hebrews was compelled to interpret the death of Christ in sacrificial terms (Heb. 7-10) in order to explain why the new religion could discard this world-old custom.”²⁰ This shows something of the reach and sweep of the “new knowledge.” It can read infant sacrifice into what the Old Testament declares to be the Law of Moses and read the vicarious atonement out of New

¹⁸ PEAKE, p. 573. Bousset states this view clearly as follows: “The prophets have always been powerful opponents of ceremonial worship, not merely degraded forms of it, but any forms . . . Jehovah, they announced, took no pleasure in bloody sacrifice and burnt sacrifice, in feasts, and new moons, and Sabbath solemnities. He had commanded none of these things from the fathers in the desert” (*What is Religion?* p. 132f.)

¹⁹ The 53rd of Isaiah, especially vss. 10-12, constitutes a serious difficulty in the way of the acceptance of this view. Prof. Wardle tells us that “The text of these verses [vss. 10-12] is so corrupt that any translation is hazardous” (PEAKE, p. 467f.). Prof. Kennett makes the assertion: “It is indeed improbable that there is in this whole section concerning the Servant of the Lord (Isaiah lii. 13, liii.) any *sacrificial* imagery” (*The Lord’s Supper*, p. 41f.). This statement would be absurd, did not Prof. Kennett, like Prof. Wardle, have recourse to the familiar device of the critic, questioning the correctness of the text, a procedure which shows that the prophet succeeded in what Dr. Addison Alexander calls his “obvious design,” viz., to make it “impossible for any ingenuity of learning to eliminate the doctrine of vicarious atonement” from the passage (*The Later Prophecies of Isaiah*, p. 278).

²⁰ *The Religion of Israel*, p. 210. Similarly in commenting on the 51st Psalm Dr. Barton remarks, “The Father needs no propitiation except the penitence of the son for whom he has waited so long” (p. 215)—a statement which clearly indicated that Dr. Barton discards the closing verses of this psalm as spurious.

Testament Christianity.²¹ How does the critic succeed in bringing about these startling results?

The "critical" study of the Old Testament is very far from being a simple matter. On the contrary it is so full of technical difficulties and involves problems of such varied nature, that it has remained, as Professor Jackson regretfully points out, very largely a *terra incognita* not merely to the majority of laymen, but to very many ministers as well. And it is not seldom the case that those who adopt it do not clearly understand it. Indeed the critics themselves are not backward in asserting that its problems are problems for scholars and must be left to them. It is the results, the "assured results," arrived at by these scholars that they are so eager to pass on to the rank and file. But while criticism is a highly technical and intricate subject, and one in the mazes of which the unlearned and even the learned may easily lose his way, it is not difficult to single out the two great guiding principles or rules of criticism as it is understood to-day which are responsible for such radical and

²¹ It is important to observe that the "New Testament inference" has been drawn clearly by several of the O. T. contributors to PEAKE. Wade in his *New Testament History* (p. 620), Kennett in *The Last Supper* (cf. especially his "paraphrase," p. 35ff.), Lofthouse, in *Ethics and Mediation* (p. 133ff.) all deny that the death of Christ was a substitutionary atonement; while Carpenter, in *Jesus or Christ* (p. 234f.) tells us: "Jesus remains for us a man of his country, race and time," which of course carries with it a denial of the atonement. Of other writers who have drawn the inference it will suffice to mention Bousset and Loisy. The latter sees in the Cross, (as an ex-Catholic he naturally has the Mass especially in mind), "the quintessence (*sublimation*) of the most abominable of sacrifices, human sacrifices" (*Le Sacrifice*, p. 528).—It is worthy of note that Ritschl, whose aversion to the doctrine of penal substitution is well known, accepted the critical theory of a distinction between the prophetic and the priestly teaching and regarded the former as the true one (*Rechtfertigung u. Versöhnung*³, II, 53f.). It may also be noted that like Wardle, Kennett and others he questioned the correctness of the text of Isaiah liii. This is natural in view of "the great influence of Isa. liii. upon the early conception of the death of Christ" (cf. G. F. Moore, *Encyc. Bib.*, col. 4233). The Ritschlian and the Higher Critic of the O. T. consequently have in this matter a common interest.

destructive conclusions as these, to which your attention has just been called. The first of these rules is *negative*. It may be stated as follows:—

THE DOCUMENTS OF THE OLD TESTAMENT, ESPECIALLY THOSE DEALING WITH THE EARLY PERIOD, ARE ALL MORE OR LESS UNRELIABLE, AND FREQUENTLY CANNOT BE ACCEPTED AT THEIR FACE VALUE OR IN THEIR OBVIOUS SENSE.

This conclusion may be arrived at in various ways. One passage may be unreliable because its text is thought to be corrupt, another because it is late, another because its author is prejudiced, another because it contains discrepancies, another because it is too "ideal" or too "advanced,"—the general result is the same, the Old Testament as a whole is unreliable.

This may seem to be an extreme statement, but it is not hard to prove. Professor Kennett tells us: "Of the religion of the tribes of Israel proper at the time of the conquest of Palestine we have no direct information; all the stories relating to this period are written for the edification of later ages and are coloured by their circumstances."²² Let us hear a second witness, Professor Henry Preserved Smith. Writing of Moses, he says: "All that we can with probability conclude from this stream of tradition [the Pentateuchal documents] is that a man named Moses had a marked influence on the religious development of early Israel. That he was not a legislator in the later sense of the word seems obvious."²³ You will admit I think that it is correct to call this first rule of the critics a negative one. For a principle which in the face of all the evidence regarding the Mosaic period furnished us by the books of Exodus Leviticus, Numbers, and Deuteronomy, makes it possible

²² Hastings, *Encycl. of Religion and Ethics*, article "Israel," p. 400.

²³ *Religion of Israel*, p. 46. A like remarkable statement is the following which is cited from Day's *Social Life of the Hebrews*. In the chapter entitled "The Influence of Individuals," which deals with the period of the Judges, he remarks: "We begin with Samson, for of Joshua little of a reliable nature is known" (p. 49). Think of regarding Samson as more historical than Joshua!

for the critic to say with assurance that we have "no direct information" regarding it, is certainly a negative principle.

But does this mean that the period of Moses, for example, is really an utter blank as far as any reliable information is concerned? By no means! For the second rule is the positive one. It may be stated thus:

THE MATERIALS CONTAINED IN THE OLD TESTAMENT MUST BE TESTED, SORTED, INTERPRETED, SUPPLEMENTED, AND THE REAL HISTORY RECONSTRUCTED, IN SO FAR AS THIS IS POSSIBLE, BY MEANS OF A COMPARATIVE STUDY, GUIDED AND CONTROLLED (WHERE NECESSARY) BY THE THEORY OF EVOLUTION.

This is the *positive* principle. By means of it the real value of the Old Testament documents is to be determined. Where secular history has furnished us definite facts, the statements of the Old Testament will of course be compared directly with them. Where the extra-biblical data are of a more general nature, the comparison will be by analogy and the theory of evolution will be more strictly applicable.

Here is what Dr. S. A. Cook of Cambridge, himself a higher critic, has to say about the comparative method: "Among the most conspicuous features of modern research has been the application, in their widest extent, of anthropological and comparative methods of inquiry. The effect has been to break down racial, intellectual, and psychical boundaries, and to bring into relation all classes and races of men, all types of organic life, all forms of 'matter.'"²⁴ Notice this further statement: "The comparative method is commonly bound up with certain persistent and prevalent notions of the 'evolution' of thought and the 'survival' of rude, superstitious or otherwise irrational beliefs and practices from an earlier and more backward stage in the history of culture." Now Dr. Cook while believing in this method ventures to point out that problems may be more complex

²⁴ Article, "Religion" (p. 664) in Hastings, *Encyc. of Religion and Ethics*.

than we suppose and care should be used in applying it. But what it is especially important to our purpose to notice is that Dr. Cook states that the *tendency* of the comparative method is to "break down" all differences and "relate" all phenomena;²⁵ and that the theory of evolution is commonly bound up with it.

Let us now pass on to consider, concretely the application in the hands of the critics of these two principles to the Old Testament.

The Story of Hannah is one of the most touchingly beautiful in the whole Bible. It stands out with singular attractiveness against the dark background of what has been aptly called "Israel's iron age," the rough period when the Judges ruled. And the story itself has its dark shadows as well as its shining vistas. The darkest shadow of all, perhaps, is when Eli seeing Hannah's lips moving in earnest prayer, accuses her of drunkenness—Eli, whose rebuke of his worthless sons was so mild and unavailing! Regarding this story, Principal Bennett has this to say: "The priest of the sanctuary, Eli, a local magnate, also spoken of as 'judge,' (iv. 18) occupied an official seat close by: he knew that the religious character of the occasion did not always prevent feasting from degenerating into excess (Is. xxviii. 7, Am. ii. 8), so that when he saw Hannah moving her lips without making any audible sound, he thought she was drunk and rebuked her."²⁶ With this part of the narrative the critic has no fault to find. It fits into his theory that the feasts of the Lord originally partook much of the nature of similar feasts in neighboring peoples and were not free from unworthy and even immoral (orgiastic) features. But, how about Hannah's Song? This is what Dr. Bennett tells us: "This poem is quite unsuited to Hannah's circumstances; its the-

²⁵ Bousset (*What is Religion?*, p. 7) sets this view in its religious aspect squarely over against the belief (he calls it, "this wide-spread opinion") in the uniqueness and finality of the Christian religion, asserting that it is this new conception which has made the modern scientific study of religion possible.

²⁶ PEAKE, p. 274f.

ology is too advanced for primitive times (vss. 2, 6, 8), and the reference to the 'king' (vs. 10) implies an actual king and indicates the period of the Monarchy, or is Messianic, i.e., connected with the hope of an ideal king, and implies a post-exilic date."²⁷ Poor Hannah! that part of the narrative which contains Eli's base suggestion that she was drunk can be accepted without demur, and may even be welcomed by the critic because of the light which it casts upon the religious practices of that benighted age. But, the "theology" of her song is too advanced to be allowed to her; and she, the mother of Samuel the King-maker, may not be permitted to speak of the king!

But, we may ask, what was the nature of the religion of this primitive period for which the Song of Hannah was too advanced? We have already seen that according to Principal Joyce the religion of Israel in the days of the Monarchy did not obviously differ materially from that of the neighboring tribes. And if that be the case Hannah's Song might well be regarded as too advanced. But what is the proof of this remarkable statement, by what critical legerdemain does this simple psalm of praise become too advanced for the *post Mosaic* period? A few examples will serve to illustrate the way it is done.

Professor Addis has this to say about the covenant name Jehovah: "The correct pronunciation of the name is Yahwe, and in Exod. iii. 14 it is said to mean, 'I will be what I am wont to be'; in other words, through all change and in each manifestation of Himself Jehovah remains the same ever-faithful God. No one will deny that this is a beautiful and sublime interpretation—but we must remember that we meet it first in a writer who lived centuries after Moses. It is, moreover, most unlikely, considering the social conditions of the tribes in Mosaic times, that they would have understood or accepted a divine name so abstract and refined. . . . Other modern explanations are much more in accordance with the analogy of early religions which

²⁷ PEAKE, p. 275.

begin with material conceptions, and they are consistent with sound philology. Three of these may be mentioned here: viz. 'he who casts down,' rain, hail, lightning, etc.; 'he who casts down' his foes; 'he who blows,' on which last supposition Jehovah was at first a wind god like the Assyrian Ramman, or the Teutonic Wodan."²⁸ You observe the method? It is very simple! It is also very effective! The document is affirmed to be *late*; it is assumed to be *unreliable*; its explanation of the name Jehovah, is declared to be too *advanced* for a primitive people; one more in harmony with the *analogy* of other religions is substituted, and the name Yahwe can now be "plausibly" cited as supporting the view that the God of Israel was originally a storm god like Ramman or Wodan. Real proof there is none. The Old Testament does tell us of course that the Lord thunders from heaven and that He rides upon the wings of the wind. But that does not make Him a weather god. And no valid objection can be brought against the interpretation of the name given us in the biblical record. But this other explanation suits the theory of the critics that Yahwe was originally little different from the gods of the neighboring peoples. And this is all that is needed.

As a second example of the method of the critics, Dr. Skinner's statement regarding the naming of Gad the son of Leah may be cited: "Gad is the name of an Aramaean and Phoenician god of luck (Τύχη), mentioned in Is. lxxv. 11. . . . There is no difficulty in supposing that a hybrid tribe like Gad traced its ancestry to this deity and was named after him;²⁹ though, of course, no such idea is expressed in the text. In Leah's exclamation the word is used appellatively: With Luck. It is probable, however, that at an earlier

²⁸ *Hebrew Religion*, p. 65f. Prof. Addis seems to favor the explanation, "he who casts down" (lightning, etc.). It was pointed out above that Prof. Addis prepared the section on the "Psalms" in PEAKE.

²⁹ There is a difficulty and a serious one in supposing this: the narrative tells us plainly that Gad was a son of the patriarch Jacob by Leah (i.e. Zilpah.).

time it was current in the sense 'With Gad's help.'"³⁰ Why is it "probable" that a polytheistic meaning lies back of the appellative one adopted by Dr. Skinner? It is "probable" because the *analogy* of the "neighboring tribes"—their mythology and folk-lore—is regarded as favoring the view that this simple and straightforward account of the birth and naming of Gad must be regarded as fictitious and interpreted in terms of a legend which would trace the ancestry of this tribe to an eponymous hero or god.³¹ But what is especially significant is that Dr. Skinner while regarding this view as "probable" says of it (and his words will bear repeating, since it is not often that a higher critic speaks so plainly), "though of course no such idea is expressed in the text." We can see that with half an eye. But, the legendary view is "probable" just the same!

In Lev. xix. 9-10 we have the Law of Reaping. "And when ye reap the harvest of your land, thou shalt not wholly reap the corners of thy field, neither shalt thou gather the gleanings of thy harvest." The reason is plainly stated in vs. 10: "thou shalt leave them for the poor and stranger." Professor Lofthouse tells us: "It may well be that the corners of the field were originally left so as to avoid driving out the vegetable spirit." And he adds, "That motive is now forgotten; the practice remains, and a new motive characteristic of the codifier and the period [the post-exilic] is found."³²

³⁰ *Genesis*, p. 387 (Internat. Crit. Ser.). C. J. Ball and Gunkel are referred to as favoring this view. The rendering of the AV "a troop cometh" which is supported by the Targum and Peshitto is due perhaps to a too literal interpretation of Gen. xlix. 19, which may simply involve a play upon the words *gadh* and *gedhudh*, without implying that they have a similar meaning. Both the LXX and the Vulgate favor the rendering "With luck."

³¹ The weakness of this claim is well shown by Orr, *Problem of the O.T.* p. 88ff. And we have seen that Professor Skinner himself while advocating the mythological view of the name admits that it is here used appellatively.

³² PEAKE, p. 207f. This passage has been more fully discussed in *The Presbyterian* of Dec. 29, 1921, in an article entitled, "The Quest of the Primitive."

The fact that the one motive is clearly stated and the other is a "forgotten" one, does not prevent the critic from regarding the forgotten one as original and setting the other aside in its favor.

Let us look at still another instance. Among the events recorded in the Old Testament, which stand out in bold relief, there are few if any which are given such unenviable prominence as the apostasy of Jeroboam. "He departed not from the sins of Jeroboam the son of Nebat which made Israel to sin," is the dirge-like refrain which occurs again and again in the Book of Kings. In Peake's *Commentary* the charges brought against Jeroboam are analyzed by Professor Foakes Jackson into six specifications, and Jeroboam is acquitted on every count. Regarding the calf-worship it is stated that he "may here not have introduced a new worship, but one which was already common in Israel."³³ Professor Barton tells us emphatically that Jeroboam "was not a religious innovator, but a religious conservative."³⁴ How does the critic succeed in thus reversing the verdict of the Book of Kings? Professor Foakes Jackson tells us: "The whole account of him in Kings is coloured by the prejudices of a much later age, and in view of all the evil which followed from the partition of the two kingdoms"³⁵—a very simple way of getting rid of difficulties. Of course, if the account in Kings is prejudiced Jeroboam may be greatly misrepresented. But notice how far the application of his negative principle has carried the critic. Kings is supposed to be generally reliable, and its statements are appealed to by the critics to discredit Chronicles. And if it

³³ PEAKE, p. 301.

³⁴ *The Religion of Israel*, p. 86. Not content with this he asserts that Solomon was a religious innovator and tries to make his "innovations" in building the Temple responsible in part for the schism which followed so soon after his death, regardless of the fact that the Book of Kings clearly states that the Temple was built at the behest of David, was blessed by the visible presence of Almighty God, and was rejoiced in by all the people.

³⁵ PEAKE, p. 300.

cannot be trusted, where are we to go for reliable information regarding so important an event as the alleged apostasy of Jeroboam? And how does the critic know enough about Jeroboam to be able to affirm positively that the statements in the Book of Kings are wrong? It is at this point that the positive rule of the critic comes in. We have seen that according to Principal Joyce, "Superficially considered it may well have seemed that, even in the time of the Monarchy the religion of Israel was distinguishable only in certain minor points from the religion of the neighboring tribes," and that according to Canon Harford one of the earliest codes, dating from the time of the early monarchy, was so phrased that an ardent worshipper of Yahweh might consider it his duty to sacrifice his first born to him, as the men of the neighboring tribes did to their gods. And if by "religious conservative" we are to understand a man holding such views, the designation may not after all be so inapplicable to Jeroboam as would be at first supposed. But, to enter a little into the details of the question, it is clear that in Kings the principal charge is, the idolatrous worship of other gods. Could a man be guilty of this and still be, not an innovator, an apostate, but merely a religious conservative?

First the idolatrous feature, the worship of the calves, was this unlawful in the days of Jeroboam? Certainly, you will say, the Law of Moses strictly prohibits it: "Thou shalt not make unto thee any graven image." Listen to what Professor M'Neile, has to say about this commandment. He sums it up briefly in the words, "No visible representation of Yahweh may be made." And then he adds, "This is one of the surest signs that the Decalogue as we have it was much later than Moses. Images were widely used in Yahweh's worship till the time of the prophets."³⁶ With regard to this last point, it can only be remarked in passing that this "use" is repeatedly stated in the Old Testament to be contrary to the Law of Moses. But what I ask you to observe

³⁶ *Exodus*, p. 115. The article in PEAKE on "The History of Israel" was prepared by Prof. McNeile.

especially is the sentence which precedes it—as an illustration of the critical method it is very significant. It shows that the express prohibition of idolatry³⁷ contained in the Second Commandment and definitely declared to have been uttered by Jehovah himself at Mt. Sinai, is regarded by the critic as proving, not that idolatry was contrary to the fundamental law of Israel from the days of Moses, but rather that the Decalogue cannot be regarded as being what it purports to be, Mosaic. This of course helps us to get a clearer idea of Jeroboam's action as the critic sees it. Idolatry in his day was a lawful or at least a tolerated element in Jehovah's worship; it may have been a bit old fashioned, but could not be regarded as actually wrong.³⁸ Jeroboam was simply retaining or reviving the old custom of worshipping Yahweh under the symbol of a calf or bull, a practice which had perhaps suggested itself to him during his enforced sojourn in Egypt.

But what was the nature of this idolatrous worship? It is important to observe that in the Book of Kings, Jeroboam is reported to have said, "Behold your gods, O Israel," which brought thee up out of Egypt. The plural of the verb³⁹ indicates clearly that it was not merely an idolatrous worship of Jehovah, as Dr. Barton and other critics suppose,⁴⁰ but the

³⁷ The critics are inclined to take the word "graven image" with absolute literalness and argue that only certain kinds of images are forbidden. But this is a subtlety for which there is no real warrant. The Second Commandment condemns not the use of certain kinds of idols but idolatry as such.

³⁸ Bousset expresses himself quite strongly on this point: "The right view of images has been obstructed largely owing to the aversion with which the Old and the New Testaments regard the worship of images. People forget that the men of the Old and New Testaments—Jeremiah, the second Isaiah, Paul—were engaged in actual warfare with lower forms of religion and were, therefore, not capable of an impartial historic judgment" (*What is Religion?*, p. 78).

³⁹ When *elohim* is used as a plural of majesty it is almost invariably construed as a singular.

⁴⁰ The statement of Dr. Barton quoted above reads in full as follows: "Jeroboam when he said: Behold thy God, O Israel, who brought thee up out of the land of Egypt (1 Kings xii. 28), was not a religious innovator, but a religious conservative" (p. 86).

service of "other gods" which this religious conservative introduced at Bethel and Dan. Might we accept this statement,—that Jeroboam became a polytheist,—unreliable as the critics consider the narrative to be, and still regard him as a religious conservative, not as an innovator and apostate? Yes, we might even expect that this would be the case, for "the worship of more than one divine being at the same time was the rule" among the neighboring tribes;⁴¹ and while the "fierce jealousy" of Yahweh might oppose it, a worship which as Principal Joyce tells us differed only in minor points from them, might tolerate at least in a religious conservative like Jeroboam the practice of polytheism. But,—and here I touch on a very unpleasant subject,—what kind of gods were these gods of the neighboring tribes? Orelli tells us: "They are divided into male and female groups of two";⁴² and then he adds, with a view to pointing out the difference between these religions and that of Israel, "while in Hebrew there is not even a word extant for goddess, and the idea of a female companion-being to Jehovah is an impossibility." As to the fact that there is in the Hebrew language no word for "goddess," there can be no question. And certainly to us the idea of "a female companion-being to Jehovah" seems impossible; and the very suggestion is repulsive and blasphemous in the extreme. But, is it impossible to the Old Testament critic?

The view that there was a connection between the religion of Moses and that of the Kenites has been much discussed. Professor Barton has been one of its strongest advocates. And that there may have been such a connection is admitted in Peake's *Commentary*.⁴³ Dr. Barton, whose views are very extreme, thinks that "the ritual of the Day of Atonement

⁴¹ Orelli, article "Israel, Religion of" in *Internat. Stand. Bible Encyc.* p. 1535. Orelli refers specifically to the Phoenician, Aramean, Babylonian, and Egyptian gods.

⁴² *Ibid.* Cf. Bousset, *What is Religion?* p. 62.

⁴³ McNeile (PEAKE, p. 64) seems to regard it as correct, Jordan (*ibid.*, p. 84) is non-committal, Harford (*ibid.*, p. 170) considers it possible.

is probably a survival under a new interpretation of the worship of Tammuz, or equivalent god, in connection with the worship of Yahweh." He suggests that with this was connected the worship of the "primitive goddess Ashtart [Ashtoreth]"; and draws the following inference: "Analogy thus leads us to believe that probably the Yahwe worship of the Kenites contained an Ashtart. If such was the case, some will be ready to urge that that is no evidence that such worship was adopted by Moses. It must be admitted, however, that if the Kenites associated an Ashtart with Yahwe, Moses and the Hebrews would inevitably worship her too. Converts to a new religion are not its reformers, but its blindest devotees."⁴⁴ Do you wonder, my hearer, that a man who holds such views regarding the origin of Israel's religion, can characterize Jeroboam with his calf-worship, as a "religious conservative"?

This suggestion of Professor Barton's is so repugnant, so utterly contrary to all that we believe that the Bible plainly teaches regarding the religion of the Old Testament, that I hesitated to refer to it in this place. I have cited it because it shows in all its naked hideousness the result of insisting upon the application of the 'comparative-development' theory to the religion of Israel. For the logic of the situation is plainly on the side of Dr. Barton.⁴⁵ If you set out deliberately to 'connect up' the religion of Israel with that of the neighboring nations by means of the comparative method, you cannot ignore, you cannot close your eyes to, one of their most obvious characteristics, the sensuality which enters not only into their religious practices but into their religious beliefs. And it is when we compare such teachings as these with the fact writ so large on the pages of the Old Testament that these ideas and practices were utterly foreign⁴⁶ to the

⁴⁴ *Sketch of Semitic Origins*, p. 289f.

⁴⁵ Cf. note on "Primitive Jahwism," pp. 113-115 *infra*.

⁴⁶ The unique purity of the theology and cultus of the O. T. religion is, especially in view of its environment, one of its most striking features, one which sets it apart most markedly from the cults of the neigh-

religion of the "Holy One of Israel" that we realize to what disastrous conclusions the theories of the critics lead us.

We are now prepared I think to decide the question whether, as Professor Jackson maintains, the Old Testament is more intelligible, more readable, more 'preachable' than ever, and whether the "new knowledge" which the critic claims to have furnished us is one of God's best gifts to this generation. Let me ask you as ministers and candidates for the ministry, a few very practical questions. When your people bring their little ones to present them to the Lord in baptism, will it be a pleasant duty for you to tell them that had they lived in the days of David, Jehovah like Chemosh or Molech would have accepted, perhaps even required the sacrifice of their first-born upon his altar? "Five-sixths" of those to whom it will be your privilege to minister, the "ignorant" and "timid" ones to whom Professor Jackson refers as holding the old view of the Bible, are accustomed to think of Him as the tender, loving Shepherd. To them the 23rd Psalm, as a Psalm of David, is very precious. They love to say, The Lord is my shepherd, and to think of Him as,—to use those words of Isaiah, which Handel made the theme of one of the most beautiful arias of *The Messiah*,—'feeding His flock like a shepherd, and gathering the lambs in His arms and carrying them in His bosom.' It is a comfort to them to believe that their God is the God of their fathers, the God of Isaiah and David, of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. They may find it hard to commit themselves, still harder to give their little ones to a God who in the days of David,⁴⁷

boring tribes. Passages like Deut. iv. 14f., Exod. xix. 15, xx. 26 show how utterly different was the religion of Israel from those ethnic religions in which immorality was practised and even fostered under the sanctions of religion.

⁴⁷ David, being of the tribe of Judah (one of the tribes which according to Prof. Burney was probably never in Egypt and so did not come under the influence of Moses) might be expected to cling to the "consuetudinary legislation of Canaan" and therefore to a belief in the validity and necessity of human sacrifice. Yet, on the other hand as we have seen, it is the "Judean" document J which provides a substitute for the human first-born.

demanded them in sacrifice. Do you wonder they are afraid of the new knowledge? Do you crave the privilege of enlightening their darkness? For it cannot be too strongly emphasized that the critics are solely responsible for this enormity of making the law in Exodus xxii. refer to infant sacrifice. They point with pride to the difficulties which their critical analysis of the Pentateuch has solved. But it is their analysis alone which stands in the way of the interpretation of this law of Exodus xxii. in terms of the preliminary statement of Exodus xiii. where it says definitely, "and all the first born of man among thy children shalt thou redeem."

On the other hand, if at prayer-meeting they call for the old hymn "Just as I am without one plea, But that Thy blood was shed for me," how will you dare to tell them that Jeremiah protested centuries ago against the 'blood theology' and that it was only as a concession to a world old custom—a primitive belief—that the New Testament writers interpreted the death of Christ in sacrificial terms, and thus teach them, by inference if not explicitly, to account the blood wherewith they have been sanctified an unholy thing?

Again, it is generally recognized that it is hard to interest people in the study of the Bible. Even those who profess to believe it to be from cover to cover the Word of God, are sometimes sadly ignorant of its contents. Will it make the teaching of the Bible easier for you, if you are obliged to caution your people constantly against accepting its statements at their face value and in their obvious sense? They read in Exodus iii. a statement which implies that Jehovah means "I am that I am," or to quote again Professor Addis' words, "I will be what I am wont to be." And then you must tell them that this interpretation is late and incorrect; that it is too advanced for a primitive age, and opposed by the analogy of other religions; that the original meaning was perhaps "he who casts down." They read the account of the naming of Gad, and you must tell them that the meaning of Leah's glad exclamation was probably originally, "With

Gad's help." And if you are as frank as Professor Skinner, you will add, as he does, "though of course no such idea is expressed in the text." They will read the law of gleaning in Leviticus, and will be inclined to accept the explanation that it was intended to provide for the poor. You must tell them that this is the view of a post-exilic writer, but that the "original" motive, which is now "forgotten" was to provide sustenance for the corn spirits, that the next harvest may be plentiful. And if they draw the inference that this original motive was the accepted one in the time of Moses to whom the law is attributed by this late compiler, and conclude that Moses had some very primitive and superstitious notions, you will of course not be surprised. If they are inclined to accept the harsh estimate passed upon Jeroboam for introducing idolatry and the worship of "other gods" in the Northern Kingdom, you must point out to them that Jeroboam was not an innovator or an apostate, but merely a religious conservative, and that the account in Kings is 'prejudiced.' And if they call your attention to the fact that Kings is often appealed to by the critics as reliable, your reply will be that the "Deuteronomic" redactor has "edited" this narrative and sacrificed "historical accuracy" to "moral purpose." And if, finally, after a steady diet of this kind they show a disposition to confess that they have reached the point that they do not know what to believe and are disposed to give up as hopeless the study of the Old Testament,⁴⁸—do you think that this will be altogether surprising? Is it remarkable that "five-sixths" of the church people prefer to remain in happy ignorance of this "new knowledge," or say frankly that they are afraid of it?

⁴⁸ Prof. Badè in *The Old Testament in the Light of To-Day* (1915) gives his first chapter the striking title "The Old Testament under Sentence of Life." He calls attention to the "numerous proposals" made during the past generation "to eliminate the Old Testament from the religious education of the young." He argues that criticism has made these proposals unnecessary. Being himself a radical critic, he would of course be loath to admit what seems so obvious to us that the "proposals" referred to are the result in large measure of the destructive conclusions of Criticism.

What then do the critics mean when they tell us that the new knowledge has removed the difficulties which were a stumbling block in the past, and made the Bible more intelligible, more readable, more preachable, than ever before? They surely cannot mean that the Old Testament as they interpret it, is free from discrepancies, and contradictions, from imperfections and moral blemishes. No one could affirm that their conception of Israel's religion in the time of Moses, for example, is an ideal one. The fact that the Yahweh of the critics can be compared to Chemosh is sufficient proof of that. What they do mean is this, that by their ruthless exposure of the imperfections of the Old Testament, as they see them, they have effectually and finally disposed of the old doctrine of its inerrancy and divine authority, or as Professor Jackson expresses it, of the idea that to be a Christian means among other things "to stand committed to the truth of everything recording in the Old Testament,"⁴⁹ and that by studying it in the light of comparative religion and applying to it the law of evolution they have made it with all its imperfections a more intelligible book than ever. "For," as Professor Badè expresses it, "the harm lies not in dealing with imperfect moral standards, but in failure to recognize them as imperfect."⁵⁰ And if we but recognize that there are in the Old Testament religion the same imperfections as in the ethnic faiths, if we study it in the light of a "scientific" theory which teaches that there is nothing high and noble and ideal, which has not been evolved out of something which is low and ignoble and vile, then the Old Testament becomes an intelligible book because we are reading it as we would any other book; and have no more reason to be shocked at the imperfections and crudities of the Old Testament than at the abominations of

⁴⁹ This statement is ambiguous. The truth and authority of the O. T. as the word of God does not involve or imply that everything in it is true except historically. Gen. iii. for example records a "lie" of Satan. The record is true; but the lie is a lie.

⁵⁰ *The Old Testament in the Light of To-Day*, p. 5.

primitive Semitic religion or the moral lapses related in classical mythology.

I am afraid that I have already taxed your patience too much; but I hope that you will bear with me for a few moments longer while I point out to you briefly the most serious objections to the acceptance of the "new knowledge," the reasons why it must be regarded, not as "one of God's best gifts to this generation," but rather as "a strong delusion," to be opposed as such by every true follower of Christ.

I have called your attention to the two great guiding principles of criticism: the *negative* which questions the reliability of any and every statement of the Old Testament, until it has received the imprimatur of the critics; the *positive* which makes its correspondence with the analogy of other religions the test of its truth. They stand opposed to the two great fundamental doctrines of historic Christianity. The negative principle is the direct antithesis of the belief of the Church in the authority and inerrancy of the Bible. To the simple, "It is written" of Christian faith, it opposes the "I know better" of the modern critic. No statement can be accepted until the critic has approved it. He feels at liberty to carve up a document into as many pieces as he pleases, and to assign them to any date which he sees fit, regardless of the historic faith of the Church or the claims of the document itself. He claims the right to reject any statement contained in any document if it does not suit him; or to read into it any meaning however far-fetched, which suits his purpose, and to read out of it any meaning, however clear and unmistakable, which does not suit it. He does not hesitate to question the veracity of the author of a document at pleasure, and to set his statements aside and reject his arguments as prejudiced or incorrect, if they do not agree with what he regards as the true facts of the case. He is even known to use a statement to prove exactly the reverse of what the one who made it specifically intended. To appeal to any passage or text as proving that the Bible teaches this

or that is futile. For there is no statement which can withstand the assault of the critic. Abraham becomes a myth, Moses ceases to be a legislator, Jeroboam becomes a religious conservative. The one thing certain about the Decalogue is that Moses had nothing or next to nothing to do with it. The Bible instead of being a book which speaks with the simplicity and directness of a credible witness, nay more, with the authority of God Himself, as men have for centuries believed, becomes a mass of contradictions and mis-statements. This is sufficient in itself to discredit the theories and methods of the critics. A theory regarding the religion of Israel which treats so ruthlessly its best and in most respects its only witness has a serious charge to answer at the outset, the charge of tampering with the evidence! But the seriousness of the charge becomes doubly apparent when we ask ourselves the question, Why are these radical and ruthless measures necessary? why is the critic obliged to doctor the text, to discredit the witness, to seek hidden meanings, to make a diligent search for discrepancies? It is necessary because the positive rule of the critic is the antithesis of the biblical doctrine of the uniqueness of the Old Testament religion.

The critics proceed as we have seen on the assumption that the religion of Israel in the time of Moses, for example, was very similar to the religions of the neighboring tribes and was perhaps derived directly from one of them. Yet in order to assert this with any degree of plausibility they are forced to discredit the patent claim of four books of the Pentateuch, to give a very different account of it, and to assert that regarding the religion of this period we have, as Professor Kennett says, "no direct information." They must rule out the direct information because the Old Testament asserts again and again that there is an utter difference between the religion of Israel and that of the neighboring tribes. We find this contrast set forth with especial clearness by the great writing prophets. Listen to Jeremiah: "The gods that have not made the heavens and the earth, even

they shall perish from the earth and from under these heavens. He hath made the earth by his power, he hath established the world by his wisdom, and hath stretched out the heavens by his discretion." They *have* perished and their idols have been thrown to the moles and bats. Why has He not shared their fate? Jeremiah tells us: because He is "the true God and the living God, and an everlasting king." Or, think of that wonderful picture which Isaiah gives us of the impotence of the gods of Babylon and the might of Israel's God. "Bel boweth down, Nebo stoopeth, their idols were upon the beasts, and upon the cattle: your carriages were heavy loaden; they are a burden to the weary beast." What a picture of utter helplessness! The idols must be carried because they cannot go. Listen now to the words which follow: "Hearken unto me, O house of Jacob, and all the remnant of the house of Israel, which are borne by me from the belly, which are carried from the womb: And even unto your old age I am he; and even to hoar hairs will I carry you, I have made, and I will bear, even I will carry and will deliver you." The idols are things of vanity. Is it to them that we shall liken the God of Israel? And this unique claim is not found first in Isaiah and Jeremiah. Moses in the book of Deuteronomy repeatedly speaks of the uniqueness of Jehovah.⁵¹ At Sinai Israel learned from God himself that He who brought them out of the land of Egypt out of the house of bondage was the "Creator of the heavens and the earth." And of Abraham we read

⁵¹Being convinced that Deuteronomy dates from the 7th cty., the critics are not concerned as formerly to deny that its doctrine of God is monotheistic. Since they regard the prophets of the 8th and 7th centuries as the discoverers of monotheism, as distinct from henotheism, it is natural for them to seek confirmation of this view in a book which they insist on dating from this period. Barton argues that Jeremiah was the first "theoretical monotheist" because he speaks of the gods of the heathen as *vanities*, "mere figments of the imagination" (*Religion of Israel*, p. 123). The same characterization meets us in Deut. xxxii. 21, in a passage which is called the "*Song of Moses*," a circumstance which accounts in part for the consistent faith of the Church that Moses was also a theoretical monotheist.

that he caused his servant to swear by "Jehovah the God of heaven and the God of the earth." Yet the critics try to make the religion of Israel follow the analogy of these ethnic faiths. If they are right in this, why has it not perished from the earth long ago as they have? If on the contrary it is essentially different from them, why must we suppose that it once so closely resembled them, why seek to derive it from them?⁵²

There is a striking question in the book of Job to which the critics might well give heed. "Who can bring a clean thing out of an unclean?" The answer given is, "Not one!" The critics have long been endeavoring to change this answer. They have sought to bring the pure and lofty ethical monotheism of the prophet Jeremiah out of the foul and noisome swamp of primitive Semitic religion. But they have failed and they must fail. An Ethiopian cannot change his skin; a leopard cannot change his spots. And a Chemosh-like god of the Kenites cannot change or develop or evolve into the "Holy One of Israel."⁵³

⁵² Prof. Burney speaks as follows: "A special Providence, a chosen people, a unique Revelation made in an early period in the history of the race to a leader and teacher endowed with exceptional qualifications for his office—these are factors which tradition pictures as guiding and determining the evolution; and however much modern scientific study may modify our conceptions of the process, it will be found that, apart from the recognition of such factors, the history of Israel's religious development remains an insoluble enigma" (*The Book of Judges*, p. cxx.f.). It is strange that one who can make such a confession as this is willing to go to the lengths that Dr. Burney does in the attempt to relate the religion of Israel to the ethnic religions and to derive it from them.

⁵³ The Conservative who holds to the historic belief of the Church that Deuteronomy is Mosaic will find in the late dating advocated by the critics a striking proof that there has been in the religion of Israel no such development as has been so confidently asserted by the advocates of the development hypothesis. That this Mosaic law-book is found by the critics so "admirably" suited to the golden age of prophetism is a sufficient refutation of the claim that prophetism constituted a great advance upon Mosaism. On the contrary it is clear that the prophets regarded it as their duty to impress upon the people the prime necessity of keeping the law of Moses. And the final injunction of the

It would be different of course if the Old Testament professed to be nothing more than the record of man's searchings after God. We could then trace or try to trace, as the critic seeks to do, the gradual refinement of religious speculation, and point with pride to the progress which man has made in the interpretation of his world. But that would result in pure scepticism. For how could we be sure that there is any reality corresponding to that mental concept which men call "god," and which the Moabite individualized as Chemosh and the Hebrew calls Jehovah, and the Moslem calls Allah? Professor Leuba in his *A Psychological Study of Religion* has a chapter entitled "The Making of Gods and the Essential Characteristics of a Divinity." Yet Leuba is an atheist who holds that "The great mass of enlightened men can get along without the personal God and immortality."⁵⁴ But the Bible does not profess to be a record of the religious speculations of Hebrew thinkers, though it does tell us plainly that sinful men have thought that God was 'altogether like unto themselves' (perhaps the best characterization and condemnation of the ethnic faiths ever penned); and that they have "changed the glory of the incorruptible God into an image made like to corruptible man and to birds, and fourfooted beasts, and creeping things"; and that they "worshipped and served the creature rather than the Creator." We get a very good picture of 'primitive Semitic religion' in the first of Romans! But the Bible does claim to be a record of the self-revelation which the one living and true God made to a peculiar people. As such it stands on a different plane from the ethnic faiths and philosophies. And one of the clearest proofs that this is the case is found in the tremendous difficulty, the sheer impossibility, which the critics have encountered in their effort to bring it into relation with them. The extreme methods

last of the prophets is this: "Remember ye the law of Moses my servant, which I commanded unto him in Horeb for all Israel, with the statutes and judgments."

⁵⁴ Pp. 111ff., 328.

which they employ and of which examples have been cited prove this conclusively. They dare not allow the Old Testament to witness freely in its own behalf lest it denounce their theories to their face.

The idea of "comparing" the religion of Israel with the ethnic faiths is not new. On the contrary it is very old. The prophets of Israel made particularly effective use of it; and believing scholars of every age have found it a most convincing apologetic. But this is because they accepted the definite statements of the Old Testament as true, as giving an accurate and adequate account of the religion of Israel, with the result that they were impressed, as every one who does this must be, with its uniqueness and incomparability. The new method on the other hand makes the ethnic religions, of many of which—the beliefs of the Kenites and the Moabites for example—we know astonishingly little, the standard of comparison, nay more, the arbiter and judge⁵⁵ to determine the actual nature, the real genesis and development of Israel's religion, as a phenomenon regarding which the Old Testament gives us no reliable information. The one method exhibits clearly the peculiar excellence of Israel's God and the folly of idolatry. The other method sets the "Holy One of Israel" before us as a Chemosh-like god of the Kenites who only gradually loses his repellent characteristics as man himself becomes more refined and advanced in his religious ideas. But this god of the critics is not the God of the Hebrew prophets nor of the Christian Church. As Hosea thinks of the golden calf at Bethel, the god of Samaria, he cries out: "The workman made it; therefore it is not god." And the more thoroughly and consistently

⁵⁵ Oesterley warns the Conservatives that "the study of comparative religion must in the future become one of the greatest dangers to the Christian religion or else its handmaiden" (*The Evolution of the Messianic Idea*, p. 276). The fact is that comparative religion is proving itself a menace just because the critics have not been content to treat it as the handmaiden of Christianity but have made it the mistress of the house and assigned to it the seat of unquestioned authority in religion.

the critic carries out his attempt to remake the God of Israel in the likeness of the gods of the heathen, the more strongly will the conviction be forced upon the believing Christian of today that: The critic has made it; therefore it is not God!

Now, if this were the first time that the Bible had ever been under fire, we might well tremble as we think of the furious battle which is raging about it. But the words which Beza used of the Church are equally applicable to the Bible which is her sacred charge. "It is an anvil that has worn out many hammers." It has had its Jehoiakims and its Porphyrys, its Voltaires and its Ingersolls. It has been disbelieved and denied and defamed, and the holy men who uttered its precious words have been treated as those of whom the world was not worthy. Yet the critics often speak as if this were the first time that the breath of criticism had been permitted to blow upon it, as if they were the first to dare to scrutinize it closely. This claim would be amusing, because it is so naïve, were it not so false and misleading. What *is* new is that men who treat it as they do, and use the arguments and make the claims of the open enemies of the past should profess to be devout students of it, that this fiercest of all attacks upon the Word of God should be made from within the pale of His Church and by men who profess themselves His followers. And the only explanation which they can give of this singular phenomenon, the only justification of their anomalous position is that they are endeavoring to save the Old Testament, to save Christianity itself by making it intelligible to the modern man. Now I do not wish to question this motive. I believe there are many who are perfectly sincere in advancing it and that Professor Jackson for example feels it very keenly. But what I do want to point out to you is this, that the claim of the critics that they are saving the Bible by reconstructing it, that they are striving to prevent it from being a stumbling-block in the way of those who are offended by "its discrepancies, its rigorous laws, its pitiless

tempers, its open treatment of sexual questions, the atrocities which are narrated by its histories and sanctioned by its laws," is one of the most terrible indictments which could be brought against the morals and intelligence of the Christian Church and its Founder.

What is this book which the critic is so eager to save for the men of this generation? We find it in our Mother's Bible, the book she loved and cherished above all others. We read it, the Old Testament and the New, at her knee. She taught us to love it. Many of us are in the ministry or soon will be because of our mother's teaching and her prayers. Some of us have in our homes copies of the great Family Bibles which our forefathers used. In his "Cotter's Saturday Night," Robert Burns gives us a beautiful picture of the Bible in the family life of Scotland. Some of you can look back upon such scenes, scenes from which "old Scotia's grandeur springs." It has been frequently pointed out that the King James Version is wrought into our very literature. Think of what the Bible did at the Reformation. Modern civilization is its hopeless debtor. Remember how the Westminster Confession, *our* Confession of Faith, speaks of the heavenliness of its matter, the majesty of its style, its many incomparable excellencies, and its entire perfection. The great Bible Societies are printing it by the hundreds of thousands, it is today the world's "best seller," the Book of books. What an impertinence, not to use a stronger word, for the critic to imagine that unless he revises it, and modernizes it, unless he removes its "imperfections," it must fail to appeal to the men of this and future generations. Is this generation so much nobler, so much finer fibred that it is entitled to stumble at "difficulties" which Christians of the past have altogether failed to find,⁵⁶ or have succeeded in explaining in a manner consistent with the high claims of the Bible,⁵⁷

⁵⁶ For instance, the requirement of infant sacrifice as taught in the Book of the Covenant (Exod. xxii. 29).

⁵⁷ Loisy in his terrible picture of what he calls the "Old Jahvism" brings forward this as one of many indictments of the character of

or else have been willing to allow to wait for clearer light, assured that "God is his own interpreter, and He will make it plain." And have the critics who are constantly raking over the muck and mire of what they are pleased to call primitive Semitic religion that they may find there among the ethnic religions the matchless flower of Israel's faith, and in so doing have made the study of religion, even the religion of Israel, an unpleasant and even a painful subject, have they the right to tell us that they have saved it, when as we have seen they have made it for those who accept their teaching, a mass of contradictions and imperfections?

But the ultimate fact is this. The Old Testament as we have it is not merely a part of our Mother's Bible. It has not merely nourished the faith of our Puritan ancestors and of the Reformers and of the Christians of the Early Church. It is *the* Bible of Christ and His apostles. This is conceded by the critics. Even so radical a scholar as Cornill admits that in the time of Christ "almost the same books were counted as Holy Scripture as are found in our Old Testament." And another critic, Professor Rogers, tells us that Jesus "fed and feasted his own soul upon the Old Testament, whose books were to him the Scriptures." Yet He did not stumble at its imperfections. He quoted from it frequently. He said of it as a whole: "The scripture cannot be broken." He said of the Law: "Not a jot or tittle shall pass from the Law till all be fulfilled." And of Moses He said expressly, "If ye believe not his writings, how shall ye believe my words?" What more serious arraignment can

Jehovah: "He blinds or befools those on whose ruin he is set. He provokes the crime which he punishes" (*The Religion of Israel*, p. 105). Loisy is not the first to find difficulty in reconciling human freedom with divine sovereignty. But we will do well to remind ourselves that while he finds in the Lord's dealings with Pharaoh proof that the Jahveh of Mosaism was positively immoral, Paul after discussing the same question and referring to the same incident closes with the great doxology, "O the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God," etc. The problem is not a new one. The question is, Which is better: Paul's attitude and his solution or that of Loisy and others of the critics?

there be of the ethics and aesthetics, of the moral elevation and spiritual discernment of men who call themselves Christians, than the fact that they cannot accept His Bible, as He did, as the very Word of God?

Professor Jackson asserts that in England all scholars have accepted the conclusions of the critics, and Professor Peake challenges the Conservatives to stand up and fight for the old faith, the faith of their fathers which they profess to believe. The challenge of the Liberals has not been unanswered, and it is not true that there are no scholars who hold to the old views. The errors and inconsistencies of the "new knowledge" have been exposed again and again; but, the Church of God does sadly need men today to stand in the breach and defend the faith once for all committed to the saints. Are there not some here in this gathering, some among these candidates for the Christian ministry, who will hear the call and come up to the help of the Lord against the mighty? that the men of this and coming generations of Christians may believe and know as have the Christians of former generations that, as Old Testament prophet and New Testament apostle alike assure us, THE WORD OF OUR GOD SHALL STAND FOREVER!

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NOTE ON "PRIMITIVE YAHWISM" (cf. p. 99, *supra*).

From the standpoint of the evolutionist who feels obliged to trace the development of the religion of Israel through henotheism and polytheism back to a primitive animism, analogy furnishes a strong argument for the view that the God of Israel must at one time have had, like the gods of the nations, a consort. But when we come to examine the evidence which has been presented in support of this contention, we find that it is both meagre and unconvincing.—The "Kenite theory" is based solely on the O. T. record. We have no other evidence to connect Israel with the Kenites. Yet this record speaks expressly of Jehovah as the God of the Patriarchs, not of the Kenites, and is absolutely silent about a 'companion-being,' To seek one in Ashtart or Ashirta solely on the analogy of other religions as Dr. Barton does involves, therefore, a glaring *petitio principii*. And Dr. Barton does not make his theory any the more acceptable by arguing that the Yahweh of the Kenites "like most other Semitic deities" was probably himself developed out of the primitive mother goddess.—The same sex ele-

ment which is so particularly offensive because so contrary to the plain teaching of the Bible and so derogatory to the Holy One of Israel, has likewise been introduced into the theory of the Babylonian origin of the name Yahweh. The view is held by many scholars that in the proper name *Yaum-ilu*, and similar names a shorter (?) form (*Yahu*) of the Tetragram is to be recognized. Some scholars hold further that in names like *Ardi-ya*, of which a much less frequent form is *Ardi-yaum*, and in similar names, the same divine name is also to be identified; and they take *ard-ya(um)* to mean "servant of *Yaum*" (i.e., *Yahu*). As warrant for this rendering they cite such names as *Ardi-Bel*, *Ardi-Shamash*, in which the names of well known Babylonian deities are clearly to be recognized. But the difficulty with the acceptance of this conclusion lies in the very argument which is advanced in its support. *Bel* and *Shamash* are well-known deities. But no convincing proof has been produced that a god *Yaum* is to be found in the Babylonian Pantheon. His existence must be inferred from such personal names as we have just mentioned. Is it likely that in names like *Ardi-ya* which are very frequent in Assyr.-Bab., we have the name of a practically unknown god? Clearly it is not. Most scholars, consequently, regard this ending as a diminutive or hypocoristic ending (like -y in Willy for William. Robby for Robert, etc.). Now it is to be noted that beside such names as *Ardi-ya* (*Ardi-yaum*) there are also found, though quite rarely, names like *Beli-yautum*, in which *tum* seems to be the feminine ending (*Yautum* also occurs alone a couple of times as a proper name). It has consequently been argued that *Yautum* is the feminine of *Yaum*. And since as we have seen *Yaum* is thought to represent *Yahu*, it has been inferred that *Yautum* is the original of *Yahweh* (e.g. by Sayce who disregarding Exod. iii. 14 explains *Yahweh* as the feminine of *Yahu*). The startling inference drawn from such extremely meagre evidence is, that *Yahweh* was originally a goddess, which later, like some other Semitic goddesses, was transformed into a god, because of the preference of some Semitic tribes for male deities. One hardly knows whether to be more astonished at the drastic nature of this inference or at the inadequacy of the foundation upon which it rests. If as most scholars agree -ya is a hypocoristic ending, it is not very difficult to account for the far less frequently occurring forms -yaum, and -yautum as due to the natural tendency to supply these abbreviated names with the same case endings etc. as are found with common nouns and also with many proper names. And that the abhorrent idea that Jehovah was originally a female and later became a male deity (Dr. Burney speaks of it as an "attractive explanation"!) should be seriously advanced on the basis of such exceedingly slight evidence illustrates very forcibly the spell which has been cast by the theory of naturalistic evolution over so much of our modern thinking. Whether the name Jehovah (*Yahweh*) has been found in Babylonian, except in late inscriptions in the names of Hebrews, is naturally a question of no little interest: but it does not directly concern us at present. Since the Old

Testament makes it plain that the name was not first revealed to Moses, but was known to the fathers its appearance on early Babylonian documents would not be strange, might indeed be expected, for we know that Abram came from Ur of the Chaldees. But it is far from certain that it has been found. Clay lists the name-element *Yau* as found in *Yau-bani* and several other names as "Hittite-Mitanni" (*Personal Names of the Cassite Period*, p. 30). But Hehn who also calls attention to its frequent occurrence in names of this origin, yet considers *Yau(m)* as probably representing the indefinite pronoun in Babylonian. After a careful consideration of the question from various angles he reaches the conclusion that "the Babylonian *Yau* owes his existence to the effort to find in Babylonian the Yahweh of the O. T." (*Gottesidee*, p. 243). Finally in view of the intricacy of the problem and the important issues involved it will be well to remind ourselves that it is necessary to be very cautious about identifying homonyms. In an inscription of Tiglath-Pileser, for example, Ahaz [i.e. (Jeho)ahaz] king of Judah is referred to as *Ya-u-ha-zi* king of *Ya-u-da-a*. Both names begin with *Yau*—but while the first clearly contains the divine name Jehovah the other probably does not.