

from a Jewish professor, a highly trained scholar, not trained in the Jewish schools, trained in our universities, but an outstanding scholar of Semitic languages and Semitic backgrounds. When he announced he was going to give a course in the fundamental laws of Exodus and Deuteronomy. I said to him as I prepared to take this graduate course, I said to him, I'll be at a disadvantage because most of the other students will be rabbis. They of course have been studying the Hebrew for many more years than I have. He said to me, You will be at no disadvantage. They spend their time studying the Talmud rather than the Hebrew Bible." Jesus said, You have made the Word of God of no effect through your tradition.

The Jews have spent innumerable hours studying the Gemara comments, on the Mishna which is itself a comment on the laws of the Scripture. So they are three degrees away from the Word of God and studying every word, every line of these parts of the Talmud as they have with great zeal but not getting into the original to any great extent.

Of course the same thing has happened in the Christian world as the Roman Catholics put barriers between the Bible and made it of no effect by their traditions. It was the getting back to the Bible that produced the great revivals of the Reformation.

So Satan is anxious to keep us from getting into the Bible and studying directly on the Bible. He must have been very greatly disappointed when the U.S. became a nation in which most of the people believed that the Bible was God's Word, that it was absolutely true whether they accepted its teaching or not. There was comparatively little doubt a century ago, in the U.S. in England, in Germany, in these countries there were individual scholars who doubted it, there were thousands, yes millions who would not pay much attention to it but the great bulk of people would have unhesitatingly said that they believed the Bible was God's Word and that it was free from error.

Satan produced a masterpiece in the application of Darwinian evolution to the interpretation of the Bible. This which we call the higher criticism has been one of the great forces in intellectual life in the Protestant world in the last 100 years. The result of this is of course that the great bulk of the educated class in our formally Protestant countries have had their minds filled with unbelief in the Bible—not simply ignoring it, not simply failing to follow it, but believing they had evidence it was not dependable and could be laid aside and forgotten. The great force has been this which goes under various names: the higher criticism, the source criticism, tradition criticism, the Graf-Kuenen-Wellhausen theory, or simply the Wellhausen theory.

This is a very difficult thing to discuss as one would like because we have the Christian world divided into the out and out evangelicals, most of whom think that the Wellhausen theory and the HC is just a bunch of nonsense. How can anybody believe such stuff? So very few evangelicals take the trouble to learn much about it. Dr. Oswald T. Allis wrote a very fine book on the Five Books of Moses. He has excellent evidence against the Graf-Wellhausen theory. But I question whether the book has ever had much influence, because he simply assumes to a large extent that people knew what the theory was, and gave his attacking arguments but the average Christian knows nothing about it and thinks it's just a lot of nonsense.