

The question of the Pentateuch — what it is, who wrote it, and when it was written — has been a focal point of the attack upon supernatural Christianity and has had visible results in every portion of the professing Christian world. The controversy about the Pentateuch, which was raised sixty years ago throughout Christendom, and which was especially prominent in all theological institutions, is no longer as visibly prominent as it was then. The reason for this, from the viewpoint of the liberals, is their belief that their battle has been won. At this point, since it is their opinion that it was won sixty years ago, today you will rarely find a seminary with a class which takes up the question as fully as we will in this course, even though it will be from a negative viewpoint. Today you will rarely find it discussed, but sixty years ago you would have found it presented in connection with practically every subject.

The vital questions were, did Moses write the Pentateuch? Is the Pentateuch something God revealed? Is it dependable, or is the new theory about its origin the correct one? At that time arguments raged back and forth over these questions. Today that portion of the Christian world which studies these matters is divided into two sections. Most of the older institutions of Christian learning are now under the control of those who hold the viewpoint that the Wellhausen Theory has been proved and established. In their opinion, it is just as absurd to question that theory as it would be, in their opinion, to question the theory of evolution. Among us the theory of evolution seems highly questionable, but in much of the scholarly world evolution is simply taken as established fact and there is not much debate as to whether or not it is true. Whoever does not believe in it is considered obscurantist and unintelligent, and is accused of lacking faith in the discoveries of science.

It is exactly the same with regard to the Wellhausen Theory which has been embraced by the majority of teachers at all levels of education. In practically every seminary that is at least thirty years old teachers and students think that everyone with any intelligence believes that the Pentateuch is made up of many different sources which were woven together. They might say, "It used to be that most people believed that God revealed it and Moses wrote it down, just as there