

is it the case?

Yesterday a letter came to me from a friend in Chicago. He enclosed a bulletin from an insurance company that had the name of the president of the company in its heading. My friend said, "This will bring back memories to you of the time when you talked with this man as you were returning from Europe on a steamship." When my friend noticed the man's name, he remembered hearing that I had met him and therefore sent me the bulletin. However, he had confused two distinct stories that I had told him at different times. Once I told him about returning from Europe one time when the noted liberal, Dr. Harry E. Fosdick, was a passenger on the same ship. I had also told him about the time when I had become acquainted with the president of an insurance company who was vacationing at Lake O'Hara in the Canadian Rockies when I spent a few days there. Evidently the name of the insurance executive had made a much greater impression on him than the name Harry Emerson Fosdick, but the experience on the voyage back from Europe had made a greater impression on him than had been made by my visit to the Canadian Rockies. Thus he combined elements from each of the two stories that I gave and put them together into one story. When my heirs go through my possessions and come across that insurance circular that my friend sent me and read what he wrote on the top of it, they will think they have evidence of my having met this man on a return trip from Europe. Then if they happen somewhere else to come across an account of my trip to the Canadian Rockies, they will think that I had two meetings with this man, when actually there was only one.

Such errors often occur when stories are repeated. You may tell somebody a story of some rather exciting and interesting experience you have had, and he may consider it interesting enough to repeat to someone else. Eventually someone repeats it to you so changed that you might fail to realize that you were the person involved. So it would be quite easy for certain stories to be told without any real basis of facts. We believe that God kept the writers of the Bible from including in it any error or false statements. But many of the critics have held the J story did not rest on anything definite and that such men as Abraham, Isaac and Jacob never lived. Some critics have said