

a great war occurred during the decade are false, or else this account is; it must be one or the other.” On the other hand, there are many things which might not be mentioned at all. An account of a fellow’s experience in college might not mention the Kefauver investigation or the steel strike. It might not make any mention of a strike during that period. That would not prove there were no strikes in America at that time. If you read the account of many a young fellow in college, you would not know there was such a thing as a church in the United States. Yet this would not prove that there were not churches in the United States. You see, the question is, is it more or less required by the situation that some reference be made to it? Was it so vital a part of the background that it could hardly be overlooked? You might read Marco Polo’s long journal about his trip to China and say that there was no printing in China at the time because he did not refer to printing at all. Yet you do find him referring to the use of paper money. This excited him tremendously! But he did not notice that this money was printed! To us, printing is far more important than paper money, but his interest was the other way. An argument from silence may be a tremendously important argument or it may be an argument of no validity whatever. It depends on the situation, whether mention of something in the situation is normally to be expected, or even almost certainly to be expected.

These claims of development within the documents rest to a very large extent upon arguments from silence or upon inferences about things which are not stated in the documents at all. As we looked at a number of cases we saw how that is true.

There is one more subject that is extremely important, that we will not take much time on now, which is the matter of the priesthood. According to the critics, as you know, it began without any established priesthood. They say that in the earliest documents any head of a family could act as a priest. Of course, as the Bible stands, no one has any objections to that. No one has any objections to saying that in the time of Abraham, the head of a family could perform sacrifice and act as a priest. The Bible says nothing to the contrary anywhere. But the Bible tells how at Sinai, in order to establish an orderly system in the religion of Israel, God laid it down that the activities of the priesthood