

The Pentateuch

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A. The Importance of the Subject

Sixty years ago, even forty years ago, you could go into almost any theological seminary, and you would find the students asking, "is this true, or isn't it true?" Was the Pentateuch written by Moses or is it made up of various sections written by different people at different times? The professors in those seminaries today are convinced of the higher criticism, and the students who go there are mostly convinced of it, or at least are ready to take what the professors say, and there is no great argument about it. Practically every student who is in a present-day liberal seminary, or has taken a course in a present day university is convinced of the higher criticism, but he is largely convinced of it because his professors have told him about the higher criticism. He has probably been given a few arguments which seem to him to be very strong. He does not know much about it but he has assumed that his professor is correct. Now if you simply come along with some ridicule, he will put you down as an ignoramus and pay no attention to you. However, if you show that you know the real basis on which it rests and the arguments which were advanced a hundred years ago, and carried the day for it, if you show that you know more about it than he does, then you can go on and show that, though there are some strong arguments for it, it also has some very great weaknesses. If you can show what those weaknesses are, and some of the newer developments that are not usually taken into account by those who