

Mixed in with many excellent things about the greatness of the Biblical teaching and the wonderful thoughts that are contained in different parts of the Bible and particular in the Gospels, there is an attitude of skepticism which came to fruition in Germany about 150 years ago. At that time, certain German scholars questioned everything in ancient history unless a tremendous amount of absolute proof could be found that it had occurred. This very skeptical school of German scholars denied most of the then known facts of ancient history. In subsequent years the discovery of new documents and new evidences caused the situation to be completely changed. Modern scholarship now accept ancient documents as true unless there is clear proof that they are mistaken. The facts that have come down to us from ancient times, unless clearly contrary to other facts, are accepted as worthy of belief. This skeptical school of scholars went so far as to take the German poet Goethe, and tried to divide them up into what he had written in early life and what he had written later on. Thus Goethe had written as his great life work a poem called Faust. This poem he started working on as a young man, and he kept working over it and revising it all through his life. Scholars thought they could go through the book and tell which parts of the book showed the enthusiasm and optimism of the young optimism of the young Goethe, and what parts showed the discouragement and frustration of the aged Goethe, and thus they took the introduction to the book and divided it up attributing lines to different periods in this way. Eventually, however, there was found in the places where Goethe had lived as a young man an original copy in his writing of the prologue to Faust, showing that this part of the book had not been later changed and that the whole thing had been written when he was a young man and was in practically in that situation in his final copy. Scholars thought they could go through it and divide it up into different sections by the principles which were so common in the Wolf school of German scholarship which