

Interpreter's Dictionary of the Bible, Abingdon Press, N. Y., 1962
"Biblical Criticism", S. J. DeVries, Associate Professor of Religion and Bible, Hope College, and Instructor in Hebrew, Western Theological Seminary, Holland, Michigan. pp. 416, 417

3.29
17.10

A great number of scholars labored in the closing decades of the nineteenth century and in the early decades of the twentieth to apply these principles to every part of the OT. There has been in recent years a reaction against their excessive analysis and against their too simply evolutionary scheme, but the major results of their studies are proving, even after much sifting, to have abiding value.

c. Forces preparing for change. As in NT studies, so here, the antithesis of Wellhausen's criticism to tradition was too extreme, and reaction was bound to come. Historical research in the nineteenth century was itself producing new knowledge about the world of the Bible. Archaeological explorations had not only revealed to scholars the great monuments and the geography of the Bible lands but had also led to the decipherment of the Egyptian hieroglyphics and of the Mesopotamian cuneiform script. Thus a new flood of antique documents was becoming available, making possible a more scientific understanding of the history and religion of the Bible peoples while enriching Hebrew philology tremendously. The biblical text could now be established with greater exactitude, and its meaning could be better understood. . . .

3. Biblical criticism in the twentieth century. Thus, as the twentieth century began, powerful forces were at work to correct the one-sidedness of a biblical criticism that had veered too far from the straight course of historical investigation, driven by the winds of rationalistic and evolutionistic thought. A new tack had to be taken if true progress was to continue.

a. New Methods of interpretation. Hermann Gunkel's method

b. Trends in OT study. As OT scholarship passed the mid-century mark, it could look back and observe a considerable distance between its present position and its position during the ascendancy of Wellhausen's school. It had rejected most of the too extreme views of that school, not because it had grown less critical but because it was proving itself capable of criticizing its own criticism in the

Gunkel