

Pentateuch. The critics say it was only Deut. Whichever it was, it was a part of the Scriptures. and Josiah declared he would obey them. But as you read it, it doesn't sound as if Josiah is accepting something new but was reaffirming belief in something he had accepted long before. On the face of it the account there in II Kings is not the account of the establishment of the canon. But it is an account which shows there was a meeting reaffirming the declaration of authority in it and they say it wasn't a reaffirmation but an original establishment. And that of course applies also to the meeting in the book of Nehemiah. So there is a ~~little~~ little positive evidence for the first stage of the canon. This positive evidence on the first stage as it stands in the Bible does not support the critical theory but it is evidence of a meeting dealing with the scriptures and declaring their intention to obey it and dealing most likely just with the law of Moses. And they say this is the first stage. As it stands it isn't the first stage but at least it was a meeting. There is a certain amount of positive evidence to consider and see whether it shows what they say it does or not. In the case of the second and third there is no positive evidence. There is no historical evidence whatever of any such meeting having been held. There is a certain amount of evidence that there was a meeting in Palestine about 90 A.D. A council at a place called _____ and there were critical scholars about 100 years who said that is the meeting that established the third stage of the canon. The meeting at _____ at about 90 A.D. I doubt if any scholar who really studies the matter today would say that. I say who really studies it because there are men who are scholars in certain fields and go into another field and simply take a book and see what it says and quote it and they might pick up an old book and then they might say this was done at the council of _____. But anybody who has studied into the evidence in recent years I think without exception would say the third stage of the canon was before the council of _____, a good long time before. We are not sure there was such a council. The historical evidence is slight but there is a little evidence. There are some statements in the Talmud which suggest that such a meeting at _____ about 90 A.D. and that this meeting discussed the Bible, Jerusalem had been destroyed, the people were in exile, they were going to disintegrate, lose their national existence, lose their ^{faith} ~~faith~~ in the God of Israel. They were very anxious to hold their existence, to hold their belief, to hold their unity and the rabbis in the next two or three centuries _____ to maintain the