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# THE BIBLIOTHECA SACRA

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## ARTICLE I.

### THE ORGANIC UNITY OF THE OLD TESTAMENT.

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[Lecture I. Translated by the Reverend John H. de Vries, D.D., Rector: Grace Church, Saybrook, Conn. This lecture, delivered in a course at the University of Leyden, with the volume by the author noticed in later pages of this Number, is but one of the many indications of the return of Old Testament critics to the maintenance of conservative views. The critical views of Kuenen are no longer maintained by his successors at Leyden. The all-too-prevalent Wellhausen assumptions are being now more and more discredited in the Fatherland, and it is to be hoped that his British and American followers may have their eyes opened to the anachronism of still maintaining his views of the Pentateuch. To continue to impose them upon the Christian public as the incontrovertible results of scholarship is coming to be little less than criminal.—EDITOR.]

ALL scientific investigation searches after unity. It views its object from all sides until it has seen it as a whole. That there is a unity in every object which presents itself to scientific consideration; that there is unity in the many-sorted complexity of things and of phenomena which we call the world,—that, in other words, the world is not a chaos but a cosmos, is the supposition, uttered or unexpressed, the *conditio sine qua non*, of all scientific effort.

Because of his creation after the image of God, there is an unquenchable thirst in man, even in his fallen estate, to see the universe, the earth, man, history, and everything that is found in the domain of culture, and especially the world of religious phenomena, and to grasp it as one thought, one divine work; not as an accidentally gathered collection of disparate objects or phenomena, but as one whole and one unit.

Whatever valid objections may be raised against the doctrine of evolution, Darwin's hypothesis shows that the human mind cannot rest until it has grasped its given object of study as a unit.

From this it cannot be inferred that every search after unity moves in the right track. Anticipation has once been called the essence of sin; and, if anywhere, it is in the domain of science that this is frequently evident. The searcher there will often claim that he *understands*, and takes in as a whole, what he has not yet fully *grasped*. A theory is then constructed which, because it suddenly throws an unexpected light upon certain thus-far puzzling problems, glitters for a little while. But it is soon evident that the facts did not press the theory upon the investigator, but that the theory was pressed upon the facts. Take, for instance, the "religionsgeschichtliche" method. This method, of which Dr. Troeltsch<sup>1</sup> is perhaps the most talented spokesman, aims to view the religious life of humanity as a whole, and tries to do this by interpreting everything related to religion, first of all, as a something immanent. All ideas and powers which appear in Christendom as products of a divine activity are produced, according to this theory, by humanity itself. Humanity is the author of the conceptions: revelation, the supernatural, miracle, history of salvation. Humanity is the mother of the organs of so-called revelation. Jesus Christ is the product of

humanity. No mention is tolerated of a divine inworking or of an incarnation of the divine Word.

By this method, moreover, the history of religion is interpreted as a gradually continuing development ever unfolding itself in higher forms. In the ascending scale of these forms, Christendom takes its place, perhaps even the highest. But when "religionsgeschichtlich" Christendom is called the highest form of religion, it is that only relatively.

For this is the third and most remarkable trait of this method in question, which trait is connected with the two already noted, viz. that it recognizes only such phenomena and "Werte" as, because development has no bounds, are presently surpassed again by others. From the viewpoint of this method nothing is absolute: everything is only relative.

It needs no demonstration that the consistent maintenance of these principles turns religion into something which is entirely subjective [innerweltliches], so that, at length, nothing more can be said of religion in the real sense of the word. Everything connected with religion becomes, then, a subdivision of psychology, and, except as it has been incorporated into the literary and medical faculties, the whole theological faculty is bound to disappear.

But before we draw conclusions let us consider the laws whereby the writer of the history of religions works. Troeltsch<sup>2</sup> names three: criticism, analogy, and correlation.

By analogy is understood that the criterion of the probability of an event lies in its agreement with the normal, the common, or at least with what has frequently taken place. Kuenen<sup>3</sup> goes out from this analogy when he writes: "To that which may be called the general or at least common rule, that religion begins with fetichism, develops later on into polytheism, and

thus only ascends to monotheism,—if indeed this highest step is reached,—to this rule the Semites also make no exception.” But where do we find this rule? This rule is formulated outside of Israel and Christendom, and then the history of these two must conform to it.<sup>4</sup>

By correlation is understood that there is an unlimited reciprocal influence between all phenomena of life, so that a change at a given point indicates a preceding movement at another point, which brings with it a succeeding modification at a third point. With everything that happens one thing stands continually in closest connection with the other, so that everything that happens forms one coherent chain.

And by criticism this method understands that in the domain of history there is room only for the judgment of probabilities. Thus with regard to every tradition it must first be asked, How high a degree of probability belongs to it? This renders each fact viewed by itself uncertain; and that alone is certain the operation of which we observe in the present. It makes the relation between religious faith and independent facts very indefinite, and it becomes impossible to build religious faith on the ground of one definite fact; for it is never immediately related therewith.<sup>5</sup>

You realize how much remains of what the Scriptures declare when the writer of the history of religion lays it upon his procrustean bed. Everything must be cut off which, according to the Scriptures of both Old and New Testaments, happened only once, since with what happened only once “no degree of probability can be ascertained.” That which happened only once is, according to this method, *per se*, an improbable something. Miracle must be cut off, since, by virtue of analogy, there need be no absolute uniformity in everything that happens, but a very definite oneness of sort

is required, and miracle falls outside of this. In "Das Wesen der Religion,"<sup>6</sup> Professor Bousset declares: "In this world (in which, as is supposed, everything that happens finds its interpretation in itself, where all natural and spiritual happenings take place after general laws and rules), there is, apparently, no longer room for what happens only once, such as miracle strictly taken, as a Divine interference in the natural happenings of the world by suspension of its laws." Again, all divine inworking must be cut off, since where all happenings stand together in coherence, no interference from without the world is thinkable. Christ himself must be understood as a mere link in the chain of immanent world-happenings. Hence there is no Christ, the Son of God.<sup>7</sup>

This does not mean to say that all adherents of the "religionsgeschichtliche" method, and those who apply it, are enemies of Christianity. Many of them face the Christian religion not merely with a friendly smile of keen scientific appreciation, but even desire, in the very accurate words of Professor Hunzinger,<sup>8</sup> "to be timely apologetes of Christianity," in that they try to show that religion and Christianity are possible even without supernaturalism, upon the foundation of immanent evolutionistic thought, in order that they may prevent the chasm between modern culture and Christianity from becoming unbridgeable. Many of them desire merely to clear away the barrier of what they call "ecclesiastical theology" between Christianity and the other religions, and bravely raise the banner of religion in the face of all naturalism and positivism. But in this very inconsistency the "religionsgeschichtliche" method reveals its weakness and its insufficiency. When religion must be honored as something independent, something *sui generis* in the midst of all other

psychological and historical phenomena, why should not Christianity be recognized as something special in the midst of other religions, as something which differs from all the others not merely in degree but also in principle? When in the religious domain divine revelation, in however vague a sense, is acknowledged as a reality, why with regard to Israel and Christianity should we not be permitted to speak of a special revelation?

From the above-mentioned inconsistency it is clearly evident that in the domain of religion this method cannot say the last word. It is easy to speak of analogy, of correlation and development, but in this method one looks in vain for an objective standard by which to estimate analogy, or for an infallible means by which to show the coherence between two phenomena, or for a true standard of worth by which to place in order the several phenomena in the scale of development. Behind and above this method stands the conviction of hearts, the faith; and thus with all scientific work this question comes to the fore as fundamental: From what viewpoint of faith do you start out in your search after unity?

When one declares that he stands upon the confession of the Church of the Reformation, there are many not only among modernists; but also among the orthodox, who are ready at once on scientific ground to call this an untenable aprioristic position. He who in his studies starts out from a confession, it is said, determines in advance the result that is to be reached. What I have said of the "religionsgeschichtliche" method, by way of introduction, will have shown you that to every investigator the result is determined in advance in this sense indeed, that, though he may not acknowledge it to himself, he never appears before the object of investigation as a *tabula rasa*, but with a definite apprecia-

tion. But his appreciation need not be viewed as a prejudice, from which escape is impossible, and which is more or less of a hindrance. On the contrary, it must be viewed as the leading motive in all study. Where there is nothing but scepticism, — if such a disposition of soul is possible — there is no more investigation; or, if there is investigation, no result is found because no result is desired. Hence study is not the weighing of facts in the neutral balance of passionless tracings according to the mathematical rules of infallible methods, in order in the end to separate the grains of truth from the pounds and ounces of error, — on the contrary, study is a search impelled by the logos within us after the logos outside us.<sup>9</sup> What by faith we have seen as eternal reality we are impelled, as by an inner necessity, to regard as such in all things.

Hence the protest which at all times has been raised by the Church of the Reformed Confession against the domineering tendency in the domain of Bible study. And if it seemed at times that the protest was but the result of secret fear, and of ignorance of the task of criticism, so that many looked down with pitying smiles upon those who were thought to view the Bible as a book that had fallen from heaven; nevertheless, that protest at heart had a wider and deeper tendency. It reacted against the unscientific self-sufficiency of the current scientific method. The Church felt that no method could ever determine what actually happened; and the radical error which dominated the investigation of the Old Testament was that the work was not purely literary, but that, while apparently unwilling to have anything to do with any dogmatism, it was nevertheless itself as dogmatic as possible; only with this difference that its dogmatism was for the most part far removed from the confession of the

Church. In the words of Professor Hunzinger, "The real grounds of this antithesis must be sought in a wholly different relation to the Christian truth of salvation; while, in the second place, the method only serves to give this antithesis a rational foundation."<sup>10</sup> When, therefore, in this lecture, I call your attention to the organic unity of the Old Testament, it is not my plan, in a hairsplitting way, to refute the results of historic-critical investigation; but, first of all, to try to place you at a viewpoint of this part of the Holy Scripture other than that of the ordinary training, and to make it plain to you that there is another viewpoint which scientifically is not ridiculous, not less worthy but quite equally justifiable [gleichberechtigtes]. Just now I will say no more, although I should. For there are no two equally justifiable viewpoints for regarding an object of scientific investigation. One stands—even if, on account of human weakness, always defectively—either at the only true viewpoint, or one does not. If this applies in general, it presses in particular when we engage ourselves with Holy Writ.

The object of our investigation is that part of Holy Scripture which, with St. Paul, we call the Old Covenant (2 Cor. iii. 14: *ἡ παλαια διαθηκη*). For more than two and a quarter centuries the study of the Old Testament moved in a direction which was taken because scholars assumed a different attitude toward the Holy Scripture from that of the church alive by faith in Christ. The philosophers Hobbes (*Leviathan*, vol. iii. p. 33) and Spinoza (*Tractatus theologico-politicus*, chaps. vi-x.) gave being to the so-called higher criticism. This very circumstance should render every unbiased investigator doubly cautious, lest he be decoyed into the track marked out by them. Isaac de la Peyrère, who in

1655 published anonymously his strange book "Systema Theologicum ex Præadamitarum Hypothesi," which was a literary investigation of the Pentateuch, was a Huguenot, but later he went over to the Romish Church. Richard Simon<sup>11</sup> was a member of the congregation of the Oratory, whose natural and spiritual tendency was wholly rationalistic.<sup>12</sup>

Of course whatever is presented within the domain of science must be viewed by itself. But when judgment is passed regarding the Scripture, it should be known what viewpoint in general the man occupies who pronounces the judgment. As regards the criticism of the Pentateuch, its birth is generally known. Jean Astruc (1684-1766), the court physician of Louis XIV., was led by his study of the history of syphilis and other diseases incident to this to investigate the laws of Moses. The interchangeable use of the godnames Elohim and Jahve suggested to him that in the writing of Genesis Moses made use of several original documents. In 1753 he made the hypothesis known in his celebrated book anonymously published in Brussels. It has often been said that the criticism of the Pentateuch was born from Apologetics. Wrote Professor Wildeboer: "An enthusiastic apologete gave the investigators the dissecting-knife in hand by which they were enabled to divide the great historic work into its original component parts."<sup>13</sup> But here, also, a somewhat closer scrutiny is needed. For Astruc himself writes that he hesitated to publish his work "for fear that the so-called freethinkers who make a support of everything for their assertions would abuse it for the sake of undermining the authority of the Pentateuch." Hence he did not appear against, but in spite of, the freethinkers, and he felt that his well-intended work in their hands might become a weapon against the authority of the Scripture. Astruc, therefore,

did not feel himself by any means called to apologetic activity. And when we recall that he was a Roman Catholic whose father at the revocation of the edict of Nantes had abandoned his Protestant faith; that he stood under the influence of the Jesuits; when, furthermore, we keep in mind that the Roman Catholics have always held an entirely different attitude toward the Scriptures than the Protestants; that, in the last instance, faith to them does not rest upon the Word of God, but upon the church; so that in their study of the Scriptures they have always gone to work more or less rationalistically, we must be on our guard before we follow this Jesuitical physician in his dissecting work. Says Dr. Hoedemaker:<sup>14</sup> "By his hypothesis, Astruc aimed simultaneously at the Protestant and the scorner of his day; while his Jesuitical ready wit laid a snare for Protestant scholars which they . . . do not seem yet to have discovered." These particulars need to be remembered that it may be clear that the very first beginnings of the view of the Old Testament which in many ways is current in our times should warn us not to be too ready to agree with what is offered us as a result of pure, unprejudiced scientific investigation.

But some one may say, that, apart from every intention with which he wrote his book, the thing itself to which Astruc called the common attention was true. Let me consider this objection for a moment: first, because it gives me an opportunity to combat an opinion which prevents many people from placing themselves at the proper viewpoint; and, again, because it will help us realize something of the organic unity of the Scripture.

It is often remarked: "Criticism rests upon the very data of the Scripture." But it makes a difference what is done with these data, and how they are used. At a graduation

exercise during my student years in Utrecht, a learned opponent based a sharp attack upon the defendant upon the fact that in his essay he had written the same word now with a capital and again with a common letter. He truly brought out actual data. But the interpretation of them was altogether wrong. In the same way we need not assume too readily that the material of facts, *per se*, demands that interpretation which current higher criticism has put upon it. And here I may simply appeal to Professor Eerdmans, who, in the first part of his "Alttestamentliche Studien," draws the conclusion that the critical analysis which views Genesis as a compilation of documents from P, J, and E is not able to explain satisfactorily the literary peculiarities which mark the book.<sup>15</sup> Again, it is a very superficial mode of procedure, on the ground of the use of different names of God, to infer that it is compiled from documents of different sources. It is well known that the newer critics unanimously attribute Gen. ii. 4b-iv. 26 to J. But do we find here the name Jahve used alone? Not at all. In chapter ii. we find Jahve-Elohim eleven times, in chapter iii. nine times the same composite, and Elohim four times besides; and in chapter iv. Jahve ten times, and Elohim once. Actually both names of God are here used. This surely is something to consider for the man who swears by the diversity of sources. In his treatment of the distinction between J on the one side and E and P on the other, Professor Wildeboer<sup>16</sup> observes that "E uses many uncommon words and J distinguishes itself by many peculiar expressions. These and other peculiarities can be taken into account after the division has taken place on other grounds; but this provides no sufficient ground for the division itself. *One has firm ground under foot only when in the history previous to the revelation of Moses the author uses Jahve or*

*Elohim as names of God.*<sup>17</sup> When, in the last instance, such a part, by reason of language, style, and content, cannot be attributed to the priestly Elohist, then it is original with the prophetic Elohist." In Gen. ii.-iv., therefore, one has not that firm ground under foot which Professor Wildeboer speaks of, however unanimously the critics attribute these chapters to J (with the exception of ii. 1-4a). Now it may be said: In Gen. ii.-iv. originally Jahve only was used (except where Elohim alone is found), but the redactor added Elohim in order to show that Jahve in chapters ii.-iv. meant the same as Elohim in chapter i.<sup>18</sup> But this is purely conjectural, for which the traditional test offers not the slightest certainty.

In connection with the occurrence of the Divine appellation Elohim in this part, one can say: The writer, the Jahvist, does this purposely. But when you accept this, why, then, might not Gen. i., as well as chapters ii.-iv., be by the same author, who purposely used the word Elohim only in Gen. i. and after that Jahve-Elohim, etc.? If the Jahvist consciously distinguished between the use of the two Divine appellations, surely Moses also may have done the same.<sup>19</sup>

The question why Elohim is used in the narrative of the creation and Jahve-Elohim in the story of Paradise has a plausible answer. Elohim is the name of God as Creator and Governor of the world. It indicates God in that universal attitude in which he stands to all his works. Jahve is his name when there is reference to the covenant relation between himself and man, between himself and Israel. This name indicates God in that special relation into which he enters with some of his creatures. It is keenly felt, therefore, that in the conversation between Eve and the serpent the Elohim name is used, and not Jahve. In spite of the bold

utterance of Professor Wildeboer, not a few of those who have consented to the division of sources have always recognized that, apart from this division, in many cases the interchangeable use of the two Divine appellations can be satisfactorily explained. Professor Eerdmans candidly asserts: "He who divides Genesis on the basis of the Divine appellations is on the wrong track."<sup>20</sup>

To most of the newer critics, the Old Testament, under critical treatment, has ceased to be the first part of Holy Scripture, and has become a book in which the remnants of Hebrew literature have been preserved for us. That is to say: Had the Old Testament continued to be the book of the Words of God for them, intrusted by the Lord to Israel, the study of the critics would have run another course. He who takes Kautzsch's "Abriss der Geschichte des alttest. Schrifttums" in hand, and in the introduction reads: "Even as with other peoples, so also in Israel, the most ancient period of literature was preceded by a time of songs and legends," perceives at once that here the Scripture has ceased to be Scripture, and that here Israel is no longer the people of special revelation. Kautzsch speaks about "Volksdichtung" and about the conditions to which the origin of this poetry is bound. But the revelation of God is not bound to our rules for the development of art. From his viewpoint Kautzsch may well complain that so little of the ancient folk-song has been preserved. But here an entirely different viewpoint from that of the literator is not only possible, but necessary. In sooth, all sorts of objections still remain against the whole theory of the beginnings of Israelitish literature. For the Song of Deborah and the fable of Jotham, which, according to the critics, belong to the oldest part of the Old Testa-

ment, exhibit a masterly use of form at which even Kautzsch is astonished.<sup>21</sup>

Professor Wildeboer uses interchangeably the expressions Books of the Old Covenant and Israel's literature.<sup>22</sup> With him, also, literary interest weighs heaviest when, of criticism, he declares that it "leaves the Bible to witness for itself, and therefore dismisses all opinions of later compilers, copyists, and scholars who demand that we shall read the Scripture through their glass!"<sup>23</sup> But we reply, first, that it cannot be made out clearly by the critical method, neither is it determined, what is gloss or redactional work or added explanation. This is arrived at chiefly by the conviction with which one approaches the Scripture. The two problems: Whence comes the content of Scripture, is it the product of evolution or of revelation? and: How did the books of the Scripture in the literary sense originate? stand in closest relation to one another.<sup>24</sup> But, secondly, let us grant that criticism is able accurately to discriminate between original writings and later additions by compilers, copyists, and scholars, we may not forget that without the labor of these compilers, etc., the Bible had never been the Scripture. That which from the literary viewpoint may be divided may theologically be one.

Hence we are fully entitled to declare that the method which is applied to the Old Testament by the most commanding scholars<sup>25</sup> does no justice to this part of the Holy Scripture, because it approaches the Scripture with a preëstablished opinion which is antagonistic to what the Scripture itself declares concerning the books of the Old Covenant. The Scripture itself speaks of the "Words of God," and hence views the Old Testament also as the record of the revelation of God. I know well that many Old-

Testamentaci who wholly accept the method and the results of the newer criticism, yet speak of revelation, or, like Wildeboer, even of "a special revelation of God in Israel."<sup>26</sup> We may not question for a moment the integrity of such an utterance, but we should speak in this connection of one use of the word "revelation" which leads one into a wrong track. When, for instance, one turns to Lohr's small "Alttest. Religionsgeschichte," in which purely evolutionistically are treated successively a Beduin-religion, a Bauern-religion, and a Gemeinde-religion, one needs not be surprised to find there also a paragraph "über den Offenbarungscharakter der alttest. Religion." But it soon appears what Lohr understands thereby when he writes: "In the special cases in which it appears, this revelation is not to be taken as something magical or miraculous. Neither is the line of its development by any means a straight line. Nevertheless, the history of the Old Testament religion exhibits — permit me here to use for once an otherwise critical expression — a wonderful, spiritual development in the face of which we cannot repress the thought of a providential leading."<sup>27</sup>

Ah, you exclaim perhaps with surprise, Is this the heart of the blunder [ist das des Pudels Kern]? But who, save a positive unbeliever, does not recognize God's providence which is over all his works! He who uses the word revelation in such a way that it means no more than what Kuenen would call "natural development"<sup>28</sup> is guilty of idea reduction [Entwertung der Begriffe]. And even though he himself may not be conscious of this Entwertung, he who has discerned it once cannot again pass it by.

While thus far, for the most part, I have spoken to you merely in a negative way, by showing that the newer criti-

cism should not be accounted as the unbiased over against the "traditional" or "dogmatic" view, since it also comes to the Scripture with a definite opinion of its own; and that this opinion is entirely different from what the church in all ages, and the Reformed Church in particular, on the ground of the Scripture itself, has confessed concerning the Scripture; I will now pass on to the more positive part of my lecture.

In all ages there has been a people of God who live by his Word. The patriarchs lived by his promises. The people of Israel has lived by the law and the prophets. The church of the New Covenant is built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets. Whenever error crept into the Christian church, the battle against it was waged in the right way only when appeal was made to the Word of the Lord. In the days of the Reformation the authority of the Roman hierarchy was shaken, not for the purpose of establishing the autonomy of the conscience, but the liberty of the conscience within the bounds of the Word of God. I am well aware that Articles II.-VII. of our Reformed Confession do not appeal strongly to us children of the twentieth century. But enter once into the churchly conditions of those days. Make it for once clear to your mind that, in spite of the sweetness of the mystics, the living truth was bound up in formulas and in externals. Then listen to the music that thrills in these Articles. Only when you see the Romish Church in the background, which accepted the Scripture theoretically as one of the sources of dogmatics alongside of tradition, the pope, councils, the church, church fathers, reason, etc.,<sup>29</sup> but which practically ignored the most positive utterances of the Scripture, and placed it beneath tradition and pope and church, can you understand the spiritual power

which speaks from that Confession. The Apocrypha are clearly distinguished from the canonical books as of lesser value; so that they can confirm no single article of faith, let alone attack the authority of the Holy Scripture. The canonical books are acknowledged as the only rule of faith, not so much because the church accepts them, as because the Holy Spirit bears witness to them. And the content of the Scripture is complete, as well in the sense of *sufficiens* as of *perfectus*. It needs nothing more either quantitatively or qualitatively. "Neither may we compare any writings of men, though ever so holy, with these divine Scriptures, nor ought we to compare custom, or the great multitude, or antiquity, or succession of times or persons, or councils, decrees, or statutes, with the truth of God, for the truth is above all; for all men are of themselves liars, and more vain than vanity itself" (art. vii.).

Of the divine character of the Scripture, the Confession declares: "that this Word of God was not sent, nor delivered, by the will of man, but that holy men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost" (art. iii.).

This too is a viewpoint from which to study the Scripture: God's Spirit witnesses in us that the Scripture is the Word of the living God, spoken by men of God as they were moved by the Holy Ghost: so that nothing can be compared with it; so that it is the only and infallible rule of faith and practice. He who so stands before the Scripture sees the Scripture as a whole, as an organic whole, as a building constructed after a vast plan, as a structure dominated by one thought. He who so stands before the Scripture cannot separate the Old Testament from the New. The whole Old Covenant speaks of Christ, the incarnate Word, even as he himself witnessed of the Old Testament books: these are

they which testify of me; or, as the Apocalypse puts it, the testimony of Jesus is the spirit of prophecy (Rev. xix. 10).

Of course it might be said, This unity was imposed upon it. From scattered building materials — and criticism desires but to exhibit and view separately these several building materials, which have done service — a mighty spirit (or a school) has been able to create a harmonious whole. But in that case the unity of the Scripture would be a philosophical, ephemeral, and not a living one. Or if one says: This work of collecting and ordering and putting together can equally be a work where the Holy Spirit impels and directs, — the right view of Scripture, nevertheless, must always go out from the whole which has thus originated.<sup>30</sup>

It needs no lengthy demonstration to show that this viewpoint regarding the Scripture can be construed in various ways. The testimony of such a man as Monier Williams, the learned scholar of Sanscrit and the Indian religions (1819–1899), who began by saying that Hinduism and Buddhism “were imposing efforts of the human spirit which works itself up to Christianity,” but ended with the acknowledgment that the holy books of the Indiërs showed all “developments in the wrong direction”; such a witness may provide food for thought to those who say after Kuenen, in his “Godsd. van Israël”:<sup>31</sup> “Faith in the election of the people of Israel includes that its religion has an entirely singular excellency, and so far excels all other religious forms as God’s work is more glorious than man’s. This, too, is a judgment which in earlier times would have gained a ready consent. The other religions were not known. . . . Now it is different.” After a most painstaking study in his essay on “De valsche profetie in Israël,” Dr. G. Ch. Aalders<sup>32</sup> comes to the conclusion, “that with none of the ancient

culture-peoples can one find a formal analogy of Israelitish prophecy, not in Babylon, not among the Canaanites and Phœnicians, not in Egypt, not in classical Greece or Rome. . . . Taken as a whole, the Israelitish prophecy exhibits a sharply-defined character of its own which, even in its formal aspect, differs considerably from the mantic phenomena in the religious life of the peoples." James Orr<sup>33</sup> points to Israel's monotheism which is found even in the oldest documents; to the counsel of peace for the salvation of sinners, which finds absolutely no parallel in the only teaching — the doctrine of Zoroaster — which shows a faint agreement therewith; and also to the indissoluble tie which the Scripture establishes between religion and morality.

All these views, however, may confirm or shock us in our conviction regarding the Scripture: they cannot impart one. It is enough for the moment if it is plain that this viewpoint of faith is no absurdity which can be passed by with a mere shrug of the shoulder. But he who in Old Testament investigation goes out from entirely other, from more scriptural, than the philosophical or dogmatic principles of the newer critical school, must reach at many points entirely other results. This has been most soundly formulated by that clear thinker, who also went his own most radical way, Professor Kuenen. In his "Profeten en Profetie,"<sup>34</sup> he writes: "Of two things one, either we must put aside as worthless our dearly purchased scientific method, or forever cease to recognize any New Testament authority within the domain of Old Testament exegesis."<sup>35</sup> I would repeat this just as it stands, save that I protest against the claim put upon the epithet *scientific* in favor of the critical method. To deny the New Testament all authority with regard to the exegesis of the Old Testament amounts to an elimination of

the Christ from the Old Covenant; to a juggling away of what constitutes the leading thought in both Law and Prophets, and to a breaking up of the organic unity of the Old Testament. He who goes out from the Christ has an entirely different outlook upon the whole Old Testament than the *criticus*. Let me illustrate this by reading to you what Dr. Hoedemaker<sup>86</sup> writes on Gen. iii. 20: "And Adam called his wife's name Eve, because she was the mother of all living," which verse is held by all adherents of the newer criticism<sup>87</sup> to be a gloss which does not fit in the connection. Wellhausen says of it: "After Gen. iii. 17-19 (the curse upon Adam) one would expect that saddened and crushed man should have waited for whatever God would do with him next, to wit ver. 21-24 (the expulsion from Paradise); instead of which Adam embraces the opportunity of giving his wife a name, for which there was not the slightest occasion, if it had not been the intention of the redactor of this part to prepare for Gen. iv. 1-15 (the birth of Cain and Abel, etc.)."

For my part, I do not find this an acceptable interpretation at all. For why, then, should not the redactor have placed that verse after verse 24? But listen to what Hoedemaker says in connection with Wellhausen's observation: "Here we see the *criticus* verily taking the part of the exegete. And we also see that he lacks all insight into the Protevangelium of verse 15 (I shall put enmity between . . .) as well as the right understanding of the faith through which Adam (see ver. 20) *accepts* this promise." It is so easy, and it sounds so scientific, to speak of dogmatic interpretation; but the heart of the matter is that again and again dogmatism clashes against dogmatism,<sup>88</sup> and he who has a good knowledge of the Reformed dogmatics, with its distinctions of general and

special revelation, of natural and revealed knowledge of God, of *theologia insita* and *acquisita*, which distinctions, however subtle they may appear at first sight, are not merely of a dialectic interest, but are evidently taken from life,— I say: he who knows well the Reformed dogmatics will not exchange them for the abstractions of philosophic thought, which, as in the case of the “*religionsgeschichtliche*” method, dominates all too largely the newer scientific investigation.

According to this method, which goes to work evolutionistically, the lowest must stand at the beginning. According to the constant view of the Scripture, the highest stands at the beginning, always in the sense of Reformed dogmatism which has never associated with Adam a *status perfectitudinis*, but only a *status integritatis*.<sup>89</sup> According to the writers of the history of religions, the history of Israel must show a continuous development from fetichism to monotheism; while, according to the Scripture, the history of Israel, by virtue of Divine revelation, moves on a higher plane, by which again and again the line of natural development is broken.

Thus far I have borrowed my illustrations from the so-called literary criticism. In case I have conveyed thereby the impression that from the viewpoint of the Reformed confession all similar criticism is from the evil one, permit me with a single word to dismiss it. Even as textual criticism, this criticism, too, has undoubtedly the right of existence. The Hebrew text of the Old Testament presents all sorts of difficulties. Comparison with old translations like the Septuagint, Peshito, and Itala frequently compels a choice between different readings. But with the comparison of several books (like those of Kings and Chronicles) we face equally questions of a literary-critical sort. Frequently the question presses itself upon the investigator: From which several doc-

uments has this book been compiled, or what documents have been used in the compilation? I but want to show that in the answer to these questions the dogmatic viewpoint of the investigator, as well as the so-called undogmatic, is of great weight. In fact, upon this it depends whether the knife of analysis is like the instrument of the anatomist, which cuts through nothing, but merely lays bare the component parts; or whether, in the graphic words of another, it is a Jehoiakim penknife, which cuts up the roll of the Word of the Lord into illegible strips.

There is, however, also an historical, sometimes called higher, criticism, which goes much farther than the literary, and whose course is marked by the names of Reuss, Graf, Kuenen, and Wellhausen, which not merely analyzes, but lifts the parts obtained by analysis out of their connection, moves them and combines them in such a way as to bring about the entire reconstruction of Israel's history, in which the law indeed obtains an entirely other place. The entire legal code goes by the name of Moses; but little, if any, of it owes its origin and record to this man of God. Deuteronomy then originated in the after days of the Judean kingdom, and is brought in by Josiah. And the so-called priestly code, to which, among others, belong all of Leviticus and large parts of Exodus and Numbers, dates from the Exile. This hypothesis by which, in general, the order of law and prophets has been reversed, has become just like the analysis of the Pentateuch into J, E, D, and P, one of the principal dogmas of the newer Old Testament criticism. He who dares doubt it is a great scientific heretic; nay, worse, a fool, not deserving of a hearing.

You know the attractive looking book of Professor Cornill, "Einleitung in die Kanonischen Bücher des alten Testa-

ments." When you read the paragraph therein devoted to the *Geschichte der Disziplin*, you get the impression that after Ranke, Hävernick, Hengstenberg, and Keil there really never has been put forth an effort by what men have been pleased to call the conservative side to interpret the Pentateuch as an organic whole, and to maintain the place of the law before the prophets. Nothing is less true than this. And though I would not assume the responsibility of everything that has been written, sometimes in apologetic fervor, and though the superiority of knowledge and learning was frequently on the side of the newer criticism, I will here say that many an able, well-digested, and well-documented work has been published which truly deserves the attention of the most enthusiastic *criticus*. Sometimes one gets the impression that the writings by men of other principles than the followers of the "religionsgeschichtliche" method<sup>40</sup> were passed in silence intentionally. But also where their names and works are mentioned, one seldom finds an effort to refute the difficulties proposed by them, and less still a fundamental exposition of the viewpoint from which the data are considered.

I cannot give a list of such books here, but a few names I will mention:—

John Thomas, "The Organic Unity of the Pentateuch," London, 1904. A work written in vigorous style, and after a logical method which is rare.

E. C. Bissell, "The Pentateuch: Its Origin and Structure," New York, 1885. In this work one finds an extensive account of the literature of the subject.

W. H. Green, "Moses and the Prophets," New York, 1883.

*Idem*, "The Unity of the Book of Genesis," New York, 1895. Here one is clearly shown that each part of Genesis

and the book as a whole is to be grasped as a unit, and as composition.

Ed. Rupprecht, "Das Rätsel des Fünfbuches Mose," Gütersloh, 1894. The writer is sometimes somewhat gruff, but says a good deal that is worthy of consideration.

James Orr, "The Problem of the Old Testament."

These are but a few names of men who express their objections to criticism from the viewpoint of the Christian faith. Thomas alone — who seeks and finds the force of his demonstration in the fact that he will not go out from a single supposition regarding Christ; who in turn also denies his opponents (he opposes Driver in particular) the right to present so-called scientific suppositions, — must perhaps be counted one with that not insignificant phalanx, which, although from no radically other viewpoint, enters its great objections to the critical results of the school of Wellhausen.<sup>41</sup>

While I am writing this a newly published book is placed upon my table (the title page is dated 1912). It is by Lic. Theol. Wilh. Möller,<sup>42</sup> and bears the title "Wider den Bann der Quellenscheidung." A hasty glance shows that it is a work of serious study. The writer has entered the field of Old Testament science as a Wellhauseian. But, as he expresses it, not on dogmatic but on historic grounds he has been compelled to look at the Scripture with other eyes.<sup>43</sup> Let me tell you something of the results which he obtained. "After more than ten years' continued course of study, I am ever more firmly convinced that it is more accurate to ask, What parts of the Pentateuch are not of Moses, than hesitatingly to attribute to him here and there some fragment."<sup>44</sup> So he writes, and he shows, as it seems to me, irrefutably, that in either case Old Testament criticism cannot remain at the viewpoint on which it has prided itself thus far with so

much show of assurance and unassailability. It must either go on and break up into fragments what still forms units as J, E, or P, by which in the end the whole structure must collapse, or it must cease to divide the Pentateuch into different sources — on the ground of the interchange of the Divine appellations or of the so-called doublets — and thus return to the recognition of its inner unity.<sup>45</sup>

I refer you also to Moody Stuart, "The Bible True to Itself," who has pointed out two serious difficulties in the way of the Kuenen and Wellhausen theory. From the viewpoint of that theory it remains inexplicable that in the priestly codex no mention occurs of song in the sanctuary,<sup>46</sup> and that Ezekiel's vision of the new temple has been left to the name of that prophet, and has not been incorporated in the priestly codex.<sup>47</sup> And last, but not least, I will mention with honor the name of Dr. Hoedemaker. When in the midst of my studies in 1894 his lectures on the Modern Criticism of the Scripture saw the light under the title "De Mozaïsche oorsprong van de wetten in de boeken Exodus, Leviticus, en Numeri," I took but little notice of them. For there was nothing to be said against the firmly established dogma of the transposition of the here indicated laws after the Exile. But when, by the arbitrariness in some utterances of the critics,<sup>48</sup> I came to doubt and to think, I soon began the closer study of the man — whose deep insight into ecclesiastical and political questions I had begun to appreciate — with relation to the Old Testament. Hoedemaker's writings are not easily read. His wealth of mind limits itself with difficulty to the sober lines of severe demonstration. And though he never loses the thread of his reasoning, it becomes at times so involved that it requires several attempts to find it again. But you are surprised again and again by captivating figures,

striking observations, and entirely new points of view, which open up before you. And above everything else you feel that this apologete does not seek what he might criticize here and there, but that he considers things from a viewpoint of his own, and that over against the dogmatism of modern criticism he posits the principles of the Reformed Confession. Hoedemaker clearly shows that the hypothesis of Reuss and Kuenen has not been obtained legitimately, but is founded on a purely naturalistic principle.<sup>49</sup> He clearly demonstrates how it is possible that such an hypothesis brought in from without can seem to fit the material offered by the Scripture. "An hypothesis or a preëstablished opinion with which one comes to certain data has the same effect as the introduction of some matter or other of chemical properties in a bottle that contains several liquids, to wit, that the allied matter unites itself with this, while that which cannot be united is precipitated. Everything which is in conflict with the hypothesis must present itself in this system as the result of deception or influence of tendency."<sup>50</sup>

When in our country not only the eyes of the laity, but also of theologians, — who have been educated to be good orthodox critics, that is to say, educated in the faith of the infallible accuracy of the Reuss-Wellhausen hypothesis, — open to the fact that there is still another view possible; when among students generally the desire is in evidence to read the Bible not through the glasses of the sources-hypothesis [*Quellenhypothese*], it is owing in no small measure to this eminent man to whose memory I bring my reverent homage.<sup>51</sup>

At the flattering invitation of "the Association for the Founding of New Professorships," I have consented to give a course of lectures on the subject, the substance of which I have tried to place before you in the introductory remarks,

which form the principal content of this lecture. I accepted this invitation not without hesitation, knowing what study is required in the domain of Old Testament Science to render one even measurably competent to express an opinion; and that in many respects I shall have to beat my own path. For although many valuable observations and hints are scattered abroad in the above-named and other works of anti-critics, more is needed than these. Almost all the Old Testament literature of the last century was more or less under the control of the generally admirable labors of the critical school. In one point there was agreement, but not in another. One stood polemically over against it, but allowed his opponents to mark out the path. Or one took the rôle of the apologete, to maintain old views. The works I have in mind contain indeed a great deal of building material, but it is scattered. And especially now, since after what seemed the invincible strength of the dividers of the sources serious breaches begin to show themselves in their walls, there is a crying need of positive upbuilding, lest the Old Testament problem shall presently assume proportions with which no one else shall be able to cope. Even if only in outline, you will see something of the structure of the Old Testament, and of its organic unity. You will see that it is not merely a theory when the organic unity of the Old Testament is spoken of; but that, from this principle, the Old Testament with all its peculiarities and difficulties and apparent contradictions is at least equally well, yes, better interpreted than from the aprioristic principle of the Religions-historian.

This at least is certain, that the view which causes the Scripture to be known as a composition, and not a compilation, shows itself to be the more accurate, yea, the only good one. For I can tear a composition apart and turn it

into a compilation of heterogeneous documents, when — if you will pardon this hackneyed and really unsavory figure — I handle the dissecting knife wrongly. But of a compilation I can never make a composition, no matter how hard I try. And that, in the words of Thomas, is the heart of the question, — not whether already existing documents have been used, but whether the final product was the work of one mind or a mish-mash of mutual antagonistic parts put together by a redactor.<sup>52</sup>

There are in our days not a few theologians who own Christ not merely as the Saviour, but also call him the center of all sacred history, and who also accept the principal results of the criticism of Kuenen and Wellhausen. They accept not merely the division of the Pentateuch, but also the order of the documents in such a way that the priestly codex, which is the very heart of the Mosaic law, first originates in the Exile.

This very circumstance, that it seems practicable to see Christ as the center of Divine revelation and yet in Old Testament investigation to reach the same results as the modern practitioners of criticism, does not render it more easy to defend the organic unity of the Old Testament, that is to say of the Old Testament as it is, and not as criticism makes it. But this circumstance makes it the more necessary. I myself have felt, and feel ever more keenly, the untenability of such a viewpoint. For though I would not be behind any one in the feeling of reverence for those who in this domain have said: We investigate everything, but the most critical subject, that is the Christ, we leave alone; yet in the long run one faces here anyway an: either — or. For when one dismisses the results of criticism at the door of the last refuge of the faith, why then not dismiss them at the first?<sup>53</sup> When Christ re-

mains standing, why should not prophecy, why not miracle, why not inspiration? And, on the contrary: When you substitute redactional labor for inspiration, and put the wonder-narrative and the prophets-legend in the place of the wonderful fact; when you do not try to understand the prophets as organs of revelation, but as men who religiously and ethically were far in advance of their times, what then, in the last instance, is there left of Christ? He who will honestly adapt himself to the laws of critical investigation, must put every supposition aside. And then, even as Abraham and Moses, Jesus Christ must be put through the critical crucible, to emerge therefrom as nothing more than a critical result.<sup>54</sup>

Because I feel the great importance and the glory of a work whereby Christ, in the end, is not the conclusion of our critical artifices, but the leading thought, the key of the difficulties, the meeting point of the divergent lines, the solution of the otherwise inexplicable, I find courage to begin these lectures. May the confidence imposed on me by the directors of this Association not be put to shame. Above all, may it be given me by God's grace to open the eyes of you, students, to the imperishable beauty of the building of the Scripture, which witnesses of the Incomparable, the most glorious of the children of men, the Only-Begotten of the Father. Of him sings the poetry of the Old Testament, of him, the seed of the woman, of him, the son of Abraham, of him, the lion of Judah's tribe, of him, the rod out of Jesse's stem, of him, the King-Priest, the anointed of God. To the eyes that search after him, and see him, the books of the Old Covenant become something else than a patchwork; even a mighty history of God's mercy, which bears the unmistakable tokens that it has come to us through human mediation, but

which, nevertheless, just such as it is, is one living whole, one organic unity.

## NOTES.

<sup>1</sup> See *Die wissenschaftliche Lage und ihre Anforderungen an die Theologie* (Tübingen, 1900).

<sup>2</sup> *Ueber historische und dogmatische Methode in der Theologie* (Theol. Arb. aus d. Rh. wiss. Predigerverein, 1900, pp. 89 ff.).

<sup>3</sup> *Godsd. van Israël*, vol. i. p. 224.

<sup>4</sup> Here I quote what Professor Visscher writes in *Religion und soziales Leben*, vol. ii. p. 24, though it is not directly relevant to my subject: "One must cease to impose change upon an hypothetical original condition, for, in that case, the only method by which it is brought about is of its kind aprioristic and not scientific. The true way can only be that in which the object of investigation discloses itself to the investigator."

<sup>5</sup> *Troeltsch, op. cit.*, p. 93.

<sup>6</sup> Page 255.

<sup>7</sup> Compare with this Hunzinger, *Die religionsgeschichtliche Methode*, and Dr. H. H. Kuyper, *Evolutie en revelatie*.

<sup>8</sup> *Op. cit.*, p. 13.

<sup>9</sup> A full exposition of this is given by Dr. Kuyper in his *Encyclopædie*, vol. ii. pt. i.

<sup>10</sup> *Op. cit.*, p. 29.

<sup>11</sup> He wrote an *Histoire critique du Vieux Testament* (Rotterdam, 1685). Strack (*Einleitung* (6th ed.), p. 5) says of him: "He searched after scientific truth, but frequently suffered lack of love of truth."

<sup>12</sup> This was the judgment not of an<sup>1</sup> anti-critic, but of no less a personage than Ed. Reuss, the father of the newer criticism of the Old Testament (see Herzog, *Real-Encycl.* (1st ed.), vol. xiv. p. 399).

<sup>13</sup> *Wildeboer, Letterkunde des O. V.* (2d ed.), pp. 154, 416.

<sup>14</sup> *De Mozaische oorsprong* (1894), pp. 115 ff.

<sup>15</sup> See his *Die Komposition der Genesis* (1908), p. 83.

<sup>16</sup> *Op. cit.*, p. 160.

<sup>17</sup> *Italics mine.*

<sup>18</sup> So does, for instance, the Leyden translation of the O. T. See *Gen.* ii. 4b.

<sup>19</sup> Compare Rupprecht, *Das Rätsel des Fünfbuches Mose* (1894), pp. 36-38, etc., and Thomas, *The Organic Unity of the Pentateuch*, pp. 78-83.

<sup>20</sup> *Op. cit.*, p. 82.

<sup>11</sup> Abriss in de Beilagen van Die Hell. Schrift des A. T., pp. 137 f.

<sup>12</sup> *Op. cit.*, p. 1.

<sup>13</sup> *Op. cit.*, vii.

<sup>14</sup> Compare J. Orr, *Het O. T. en de nieuwere Critiek*, p. 2 f.

<sup>15</sup> In this lecture I have been obliged to speak frequently of tone-giving scholars, dominant tendency, current views, etc. The extent to which anti-critics are ignored as unscientific may be seen from the sober observation of Strack: "The traditional apologetic tendency which derives the right to investigate critically the O. and N. Testaments has since the death of Ernst Wilhelm Hengstenberg (Professor in Berlin 1802-1869) no single defender at a German university." I question if in forty years a single man could be found in all Germany able to occupy an academic professor's chair, even if he did not sympathize with the Graf and Wellhausen hypothesis. From the quotation, however, it is evident that even so conservative a man as Strack is not capable to appreciate correctly the anti-critical viewpoint. For then he would have employed other words than traditional and apologetic, neither would he have characterized his opponents as men who simply deny the right of critical investigation. This they do not do, they only ask: From what viewpoint do you begin your critical investigation?

<sup>16</sup> *Op. cit.*, x.

<sup>17</sup> *Op. cit.*, pp. 8 ff.

<sup>18</sup> Compare Orr, *op. cit.*, p. 16, and Hoedemaker, *op. cit.*, pp. 43-46.

<sup>19</sup> See Melchior Canus, *Loci Theologici* (1563), by Bavinek, Geref. Dogmatiek (1st ed.), vol. 1. p. 2.

<sup>20</sup> Compare with this Dr. Kuyper on graphic inspiration (*Encyclopædie* (1st ed.), vol. ii. pp. 492 ff.), by which he understands: "that leading given by the Spirit of God to the spirit of the writers, compilers, and redactors, by which these *ἀγίας γράφαι* assumed such a form as was predestinated in the counsel of peace, under the *media gratiæ*, by God for his Church."

<sup>21</sup> Page 11.

<sup>22</sup> De valsche profetie in Israël (1911), pp. 143-156. See p. 156.

<sup>23</sup> *Op. cit.*, pp. 28-33.

<sup>24</sup> Page 487.

<sup>25</sup> Compare with this thesis 7 at the end of Valeton's dissertation on Isaiah: "Old Testament quotations in the New are of no authoritative value as proofs for or against one or another interpretation of Old Testament passages."

<sup>26</sup> *Op. cit.*, pp. 38 f.

<sup>27</sup> Gunkel, *Genesis übersetzt und erklärt* (3d ed.) (*Handkommentar*, Nowack), p. 23, says: It does not agree with the context. Compare Gerretsen, *De val des Menschen*, pp. 30 f.

\* "Dogmatics prove an obstacle to the new criticism, because the new criticism antagonizes dogmatics," says Dr. Hoedemaker (*op. cit.*, p. 43) with reference to Professor Wilkens's treatment of "de S. monage" in de Gids of 1888.

\* Compare Gerritsen, *De val des Menschen*, pp. 12 f., 21 f.

\* Strack's *Einleitung* makes a favorable exception, as (see, for instance, pp. 240 f.) it contains a list of the works written from the side of the anti-critics.

\* Professor Klostermann, *Der Pentateuch* (1893, new ed. 1907), warns against too great confidence which most investigators place upon the results of critical analysis.

\* The writer published already in 1899: *Historisch-kritische Bedenken gegen die Graf-Wellhausensche Hypothese von einem früheren Anhänger*.

\* Page 10.                    \* *Op. cit.*, p. 211.                    \* *Op. cit.*, pp. 11-46.

\* See de Holl. vert. *De innerl. waarheid van den Bijbel*, pp. 33 ff.

\* *Op. cit.*, p. 12.

\* I am reminded here of the saying of Delitzsch that the Psalms have been altogether too much referred to later times.

\* Pages 68 f. and 79 f.

\* Pages 80 f.

\* Let me here name the following works: Harold M. Wiener, *Studies in Biblical Law* (the writer himself is a jurist); J. S. Griffiths, *Problem of Deuteronomy*; and G. Vos, *The Mosaic Origin of the Pentateuchal Codes* (1886).

\* J. Thomas, *The Organic Unity of the Pentateuch*, pp. 3 f.

\* "Is Wellhausen to count for everything when he strips Moses bare, and Schmiedel to count for nothing when he subjects Jesus to the same process of critical elimination? If we ignore the conclusions of criticism in the last refuge of faith, why not in the first?" (Thomas, *op. cit.*, p. 18.)

\* "The pure critical principle will not allow us to take our stand 'firmly and boldly on the appearance of Christ,' any more than upon that of Abraham. An honest adherence to the laws of criticism negates the presupposing of anything. Jesus Christ, no less than Abraham and Moses, must pass through its crucible, and issue forth as one of its conclusions" (Thomas, *op. cit.*, p. 19). It seems to me that these lines of Thomas point out more accurately the weakness of the so-called "ethical" viewpoint with reference to the Scripture than the whole brochure of Rev. Mr. Hulsman.