

Otwell, John H., I Will Be Your God A Layman's Guide to Old Testament Study (Abingdon Press: Nashville) 1967

Otwell is professor of O.T. and curator of the Palestine Institute at the Pacific School of Religion, Berkeley, California. A Methodist minister, he has also served churches in Ohio and California. He is a graduate of De Pauw University, Greencastle, Indiana(A.B.) and Pacific School of Religion (B.D. and Th.D).

The author says he subscribes to the History of Traditions School founded largely by Albrecht Alt and two of his students, Gerhard von Rad and Martin Noth (p.14)

p. 15 . . . the two most inclusive and authoritative introductions produced by the Graf-Wellhausen School were: Robert H. Pfeiffer, Introduction to the Old Testament (New York:Harper & Brothers, 1941), and Otto Eissfeldt, Einleitung in das Alte Testament (Tubingen: J.C.B.Mohr [Paul Seibeck] , 1934). In later editions, Professor Eissfeldt has modified his earlier work, as in the 3rd ed., published in English translation as The Old Testament, an Introduction, P.R. Ackroyd, tr (New York: Harper & Row, 1965).

pp. 17-19 The author uses faulty logic. He says that the two writers who prepared the two editions of The Prophets and Their Times (J. M. P. Smith and 15 years later Wm. A. Irwin) can be detected by changes in style, but in the illustration he gives the words of the second edition by Irwin are put in italics and the words which are present in the first edition are enclosed in parentheses so that "if you were trying to understand Professor Smith's views on the nature of prophecy, and if you had available to you only the second edition of this book, you could be very wrong indeed in your conclusions if you did not know which words were those written by Professor Smith and which were those added by Professor Irwin." You would have to have both editions or other works by both writers in order to compare for style, but Otwell assumes that changes in style could be discerned apart from this fundamental basis.

p. 20 Christians have always believed that it is important to learn as much as possible about the Bible. The trouble has been that the ways of answering reliably questions about authorship, date, the kind of literature, and the original meaning have been discovered only fairly recently. Since the ways of answering these questions - called higher criticism - have been used to write these chapters, it is only fair to you to describe briefly how this science works. You do need to be warned, however, that biblical critics - those who apply the science of higher criticism to the Bible - do not know all the answers.