

The Old Testament Since the Reformation, Emil G. Kraeling. Harper & Brothers, 1955

- p. 55 In 1753 the French physician, Jean Astruc, rediscovered the key to Pentateuchal criticism that a German cleric, Witter, had found in 1711. Astruc's views would probably have been forgotten like Witter's, the more since the leading Old Testament scholar of the day, Michaelis, found them unacceptable. It was their espousal by Eichhorn a generation later which gave them an epochal significance for Old Testament criticism.
- p. 289 W. M. L. De Wette, Beitrage zur Einleitung in das Alte Testament, 2 vols., 1806-7; a work really marking the beginning of the higher critical movement
- p. 57 Influenced by Herder's example, the most versatile mind of the time, Goethe, also gave attention to the Old Testament from a secular angle and even contributed to biblical criticism. (p. 290 - See K. Gallig, "Goethe als theologischer Schriftsteller", Evangelische Theologie, 1949, 529 f.; H. H. Schaefer, Goethes Erlebnis des Ostens, 1938, 24f. It should be mentioned that Schiller, too, took an interest in Old Testament matters in several short papers. )
- p. 73 In the theological development, however, Hegelianism was the order of the day. Notably the evolutionistic approach that Hegel had applied was having its effect on all historical thinking. Biblical studies now took on a fresh hue, and particularly all efforts to deal with the story of the religious development of Israel and early Christianity. Utilizing the results of the criticism pioneered by Eichhorn and De Wette but proceeding evolutionistically in the spirit of Hegel, Vatke now gave a brilliant presentation of the development of the Old Testament religion, on which a Wellhausen fifty years later still bestowed the praise that it was the most important contribution ever made to the historical understanding of ancient Israel.
- p. 82-84 Diestel - to our present day way of thinking this would limit him to the purely historical. But Diestel has more than the merely historical in mind. He follows three lines of inquiry:
  - (1) the purely historical ("national") which stresses the full objective understanding of the Heb. nation, of its literary remains, and of its religion in the light of its Oriental character and background. He finds this approach unsatisfactory . . . .
  - (2) The philosophic-historizing line. By this he means attempts to approach the O.T. from the angle of a philosophy of religion in such a way as to construe the Heb. development in accordance with certain ideas or principles. This approach is particularly exposed to error when, instead of proceeding from the standpoint of Christianity, it takes a standpoint in pre-Christian "ethnic" viewpoints (dualism, deism, pantheism). On all sides it threatens to fall into a more or less humanistically fashioned naturalism.
  - (3) The purely religious line. This emphasizes primarily the eternal truths of Israel's religion or its kinship with Christianity, as well as those historical aspects of the O.T. religion that are important from the point of view of a history of redemption.



Kraeling states ( p.84) that "In essence, Diestel set forth the procedure with which Christian biblical scholarship is now coming to operate. "We are inclined to tone down the second principle (though we cannot do without the unifying activity of the mind or evolutionary considerations) because of our modern distrust of all speculative constructions. But the third principle,