

Bible stood practically alone in its account of ancient history. Just about everything else we knew of ancient history stopped at 500 B.C. Other ancient writings that had come down to us gave practically no dependable information about events before that time. A few myths and legends from Greek sources seemed to be our only non-Biblical source. The Old Testament stood alone in its claim to describe events extending many centuries back of 500 B.C. It mentioned great nations, otherwise absolutely unknown to us. Mighty conquerors crossed its pages, whose very names were otherwise forgotten. Great cities were described which otherwise were completely unknown. Under these circumstances it was easy for men who opposed the doctrines of the Bible to say that its history was largely fictitious and to develop theories which considered the Old Testament to be a compilation of discordant material, most of it written long after the time of the events with which it claimed to deal. These theories, known as the Higher Criticism, were already being worked out in great detail by German scholars, but had, at that time, exerted only a slight influence in other lands.

These critical theories, in subsequent decades, came to be very widely accepted, until, at the turn of the century, many were