

## The Bible Vindicated! - 6

Last time we saw the claim by the Higher Critic, de Wette, "...we must not ascribe to him [Moses] the foundation of a Hebrew literature, but only a feeble commencement of it..." That author follows up this remark with -

"Our present four books of Moses originated in the time of Solomon [500 years after Moses]; perhaps also the book of Joshua at the same time ; the books of Judges and Samuel still later. Written oracles of the prophets began with the eighth century before Christ. The Salomonic Proverbs were collected during the time of Hezekiah and before it. The Pentateuch was completed about the time of Josiah [more than 800 years after Moses]. Thus the Law - the first division of the Old Testament - and the first half of the second division, came into being" - Introduction to the Old Testament, Vol. 1, p.25.

Connected with this contention is the question of how Moses came to write out the Law, or Pentateuch, in Hebrew, while he had been brought up with the use of hieroglyphic writing in Egypt. Was writing in fact unknown by the Hebrews up to that time? The Higher Critics chose to believe that Moses and his forebears were essentially illiterate.

In reply, we find Orr in his book, *The Problem of the Old Testament under "Corroborative Evidence of Early Date of Sources"* refers to "the enormous increase of light which recent discovery [even by 1917!] has cast on the very early, and indeed common, use of writing, and high development of literature in the ancient East."

Twelve years before, in 1905, Sir Flinders Petrie, British archaeologist and Egyptologist, was conducting excavations in the Sinai Peninsula. During a dig at Serabit el-Khadim, an ancient turquoise mine used by the Egyptians, Petrie discovered a series of inscriptions, now dated from before the time of Moses. Unlike the Egyptian hieroglyphic - picture writing of words, syllables, etc., this was an alphabetic script.

From this protoalphabetic script later alphabets were developed. There were about twenty-three letters, which are now known to be the first alphabet ever used. The inscriptions were of a Canaanite language. Fragmentary writings in a similar script have been found in Lachish, Shechem, Gezer, etc.

The British Archaeologist Leonard Woolley referred to the imaginings of the Higher Critics, who asserted "that Nomad sheikhs such as were the patriarchs, guerilla fighters like Joshua and Caleb, the down-trodden peasantry of Palestine under the Judges, all were too ignorant and too cut off from the centres of civilisation in Egypt and Babylonia to have committed to writing anything of their tribal laws and annals."

These Critics, rejecting the apostle Paul's declaration that "all Scripture is given by inspiration of God" - 2 Timothy 3:16, asserted that "the book of Moses," even though spoken of as such by Jesus Christ - Mark 12:26 - was not written by Moses, but by "scribes who composed the books" 800 years after the time of Moses.

The Critics claimed that there could not have been any "knowledge of the doings of Abraham or the legislation of Moses." They said, "comparison with the legends of other countries ...tended to show that all alike sprang from man's imagination." But to all this Woolley, a true scientist, replied, "To-day the whole position has been changed" - pp. 20-21 *Abraham*, by C.L. Woolley.