

REVISITING A DEFENSE OF THE BIBLE'S CREDIBILITY
Part I - Answering Liberal Theology's "Higher Criticism"
B. Answering The Form-Critico, Traditio-Critico and Redaction Theories
(2 Peter 1:16-21 et al.)

I. Introduction

- A. Liberal Theology scholars believe the Bible is not God inspired, that it needs critics with "higher" authority than the Bible itself possesses to explain its *alleged* evolution from man-made myths to its present form.
- B. To address this claim, we revisit Liberal Theology's "Higher Criticism" to examine its Form-Critico, Traditio-Critico and Redaction theories by way of scholarly analysis and Scripture (as follows):

II. Answering The Form-Critico, Traditio-Critico and Redaction Theories, 2 Peter 1:16-21 et al.

- A. Liberal Theology advocates offer the three following *major* theories on the *general* formation of the Bible:
1. The Form-Critical Theory – Promoted mainly by Herman Kumpel, this theory proposes that men in Moses' era orally passed on stories to others around campfires, mixing truth with myths. (1973 Dallas Theol. Sem. class notes by Dr. Bruce K. Waltke, Th. D., Dallas Theol. Seminary and Ph. D., Harvard)
 2. The Traditio-Critical Theory – Promoted mainly by A. H. Nyburg, this theory proposes that these oral accounts were then reduced to writing by Hebrew priests at Judah's Babylonian Captivity in 586 B. C. In writing these accounts, the authors made additional embellishments to the oral accounts. (Ibid.)
 3. Redaction Criticism Theory – This is the Traditio-Critical theory applied to the New Testament. (Ibid.)
- B. However, these three theories fail to stand the tests of archaeological evidence and of Scripture:
1. *Archaeological finds refute the assumption of a lack of a psychology of canonicity behind these theories:*
 - a. Advocates of these theories *assume* that respect for the accurate preservation of religious writings, a psychology of canonicity, did *not* exist when the Bible was formed so that it was *not accurately written*.
 - b. However, "The Conquest of Death" text, found in *two* Egyptian pyramids, one for Pharaoh Unis (*2,400 B. C.*) "with utterances demonstrably *much older* . . . as indicated by the *archaic linguistic usages*" (Pritchard, A. N. E. T., 1969, p. 32-33), was *never* meant to be *seen* by the *public*, for the Egyptians barricaded their tombs to guard mummies from robbers, holding that the afterlife came only to preserved bodies (Comp. Ency., v. 16, p. 542). Still, this *deliberately hidden, barricaded, elegantly carved, 2,400 B. C. stone* text with its *much older linguistic usages honored religious beliefs*. Thus, Moses, who *grew up in Pharaoh's court by 1530 B. C.*, with *all of Scripture's (later) writers, had a psychology of canonicity*.
 2. Also, *archaeological finds refute the three Liberal Theology theories of the Bible's general formation:*
 - a. Re: The Form-Critical Theory – Time magazine (M. Lemonick, "Are the Bible's Stories True?", 12/18/95, p. 68-69) told of the 1993 find by A. Biram (Heb. Un. Coll.) & J. Naveh (Heb. Un.) with the inscription of "House of David" and "King of Israel." It is dated in the 9th cent. B. C. around 100 years after David's era. Form-critical experts doubt that David ever existed (Ibid.), so this find refutes the Form-Critical Theory!
 - b. Re: The Traditio-Critical Theory – The same article tells of the 1979 find by Gabriel Barkay of two silver scrolls in a Jerusalem tomb dated about *600 B. C., 14 years before the 586 B. C. Babylonian Captivity*. The scrolls contained a benediction from the book of *Numbers* that Traditio-Critical scholars believed had *not even been written by that date*, so this find refutes the Traditio-Critical Theory!
 - c. Re: The Redaction Criticism Theory – In 1935, the Rylands fragment with John 18:31-33 was found and dated about A. D. 125 by competent paleographers (Unger, Arch. and the N. T., p. 21; Ryrie St. B., KJV, 1978, p. 1492; M. King, Bib. Sac. [73] 130:517, p. 35-40). It was located in Egypt's "hinterlands," requiring decades for it to be copied and circulated to get from John in Ephesus to where it was found in Egypt, implying a date for John's authorship of this Gospel no later than A. D. 90, Ibid. Conservatives view A. D. 90 as the latest date for its authorship (Ibid.), so *this find* and the *rich theological content of John's Gospel* (Ibid., Ryrie) that *still perfectly harmonizes with the other N. T. books, the vast majority of which were written decades before John's Gospel, refutes Redaction Criticism!*
 3. Scripture also counters the Form-Critico, Traditio-Critico and Redaction theories of Liberal Theology:
 - a. Moses in Deuteronomy 30:15-20; 31:9-13 ordered for the Law he had written to be read to the nation every 7th year as the lives of all Israel depended on obeying it, giving Israel a psychology of canonicity.
 - b. In Matthew 5:18, Jesus taught the divine inspiration of the Old Testament, and He implied the canonicity of His disciples' writings in John 17:20, refuting Form-Critico, Traditio-Critico and Redaction theories.

Lesson and Application: May we trust that today's Bible is the same God inspired Word that it was at its inception.