

a paper:

MOSES AUTHOR OF THE TORAH

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PREFACE

This paper was to be a short review of current theological journal thinking on a subject covering The Torah. I chose to address what I think is one of the most important issues involving the first five Books of The Old Testament, the question of Mosaic authorship of The Torah, for this is a most foundational doctrine of our Christian faith and a constant declaration throughout the entire Holy Bible. In taking on this issue, I found however that I had to do a fair amount of basic research to better understand contemporary atheistic theories of Biblical higher criticism, the better to refute them. Thus the longer than expected length of this paper.

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ABSTRACT

The ever changing forms of documentary theory formation of The Torah are themselves an indication of the inconclusiveness of such schools of Biblical higher criticism. No conclusive evidence by these theories have been able to prove that The Pentateuch was authored by a late Kingdom, Babylonian exile or post-exile return redactor or redactors. Nor have they been able to disprove Moses as the author of The first five Books of The Old Testament in its essential form. Biblical higher criticism can offer no conclusive reason for faithful men to doubt the Divinely inspired nature of The Pentateuch and its Mosaic authorship, which are clearly testified to throughout both The Old and New Testaments of The Holy Bible.

DEDICATION

To those Biblical scholars who, with clear minds, perceive the Divinely inspired and unerring nature of Holy Scripture. May The LORD raise up armies of such men in this present dark age.

EPIGRAPH

LUKE 24:27, 44 - "And beginning at Moses and all the prophets, He expounded unto them in all the Scriptures the things concerning Himself. And He said unto them, These are the words which I spake unto you, while I was yet with you, that all things must be fulfilled, which were written in the law of Moses, and in the prophets, and in the psalms, concerning Me!

I. DID MOSES WRITE THE PENTATEUCH?

Traditional Christian and Jewish Faiths have for millenniums held that Moses is the author of The Pentateuch, the first 5 Books of The Old Testament. “Ancient Jewish and Christian writers, such as Ecclesiasticus, Josephus, Philo, and Origen were essentially in full agreement that the Pentateuch was written solely by Moses. The Mishnah and the Talmud also confirm this.”¹

The faithful Church has for two millenniums held this doctrine. Article VI of the Anglican 39 Articles of Religion - “Of The Sufficiency of Scripture For Salvation” - confess that “Holy Scripture contains all things necessary to salvation... In the name of the Holy Scripture we do understand those canonical Books of the Old and New Testament, of whose authority was never any doubt in the Church...” This list of accepted Canonical Books of course begins with The 5 Books of The Pentateuch.²

Article VII of the same 39 Articles of Religion - “Of The Old Testament” - confesses that The Law in The Old Testament was given to man through Moses and recorded by him. Further, the moral codes found in The Pentateuch are considered binding upon all Christians: “The Old testament is not contrary to The New... Although The Law given from GOD by Moses, as touching Ceremonies and Rites, do not bind Christian men, nor the Civil precepts thereof ought of necessity to be received in any commonwealth; yet notwithstanding, no Christian man whatsoever is free from the obedience of The Commandments which are called Moral.”³

We may find these same foundations of Christian faith confessed in the Westminster Confession. Chapter 1, Section V confesses that all of Scripture - which begins with the 5 Books of Moses - is Divinely inspired and thus without error. The claim made throughout The Bible that Moses is the author of The Torah is thus to be taken as a matter of Faith: “We may be moved and induced by the testimony of the Church to an high and reverent esteem of the holy Scripture... doth abundantly evidence itself to be the Word of GOD; yet, notwithstanding, our full persuasion and assurance of the infallible truth and divine authority thereof, is from the inward work of the Holy Spirit, bearing witness by and with the Word in our hearts.”⁴

Chapter 1, Section VIII of the same Westminster Confession confesses that both the Old and New Testaments are the unerring and authentic Special Revelation of The Creator to mankind. Christians and The Church are therefore bound to them in all matters of faith: “The Old Testament in Hebrew... and the New Testament in Greek... being immediately inspired by GOD, and by His singular care and providence kept pure in all ages, are therefore authentical; so as in all controversies

¹ 1, religioustolerance.org [no author given], article “Who Wrote The Pentateuch?” On beliefs of traditional theologians on Moses as author of The Torah from a liberal perspective.

² 2, BCP, Article VI, The 39 Articles of Religion, “Of The Sufficiency of Scriptures for Salvation,” p 610.

³ 2, Ibid., Article VII, “Of The Old Testament,” p 611.

of religion the Church is finally to appeal unto them...”⁵

And so if doubt arises as to if Moses is the author of The Pentateuch, the Westminster Confession holds that we are to seek confirmation from within The Bible itself. There are many passages in the Old and New Testaments where the human authorship of The Pentateuch is attributed to Moses. Thus the Westminster Confession in Chapter 1, Section IX confesses, “The infallible rule of interpretation of Scripture, is the Scripture itself; and therefore, when there is a question about the true and full sense of any Scripture..., it may be searched and known by other places that speak more clearly.”⁶

II. WHY THE AUTHORSHIP OF THE TORAH BY MOSES IS IMPORTANT

The question of Mosaic authorship of The Pentateuch underlies the credibility of the entire Holy Bible and orthodox Christian faith. We shall see that the claim is made throughout the Old and New Testaments that Moses wrote the first five Books of The Bible. The Prophets state this directly. Our Lord JESUS CHRIST confirms this in The Gospels with His own words. And this theme is repeated in the remaining New Testament Books by The Apostles.

Closson in an internet article “Did Moses Write the Pentateuch?” asks, “Why is the issue of Mosaic authority an important one? Those who accept the documentary... theory argue that the content of these books should be seen as a mixture of credible historical events and religious poetry sparked by man's religious imagination.” If Moses did not truly meet GOD on Mount Sinai, if there is no Divine Judge of The World Who gave Moses The Ten Commandments, if all that is attributed to Moses in The Torah are mere creations of the minds of men, then the atheists would be right in their constant song that there is no GOD! “Holders of this view reject the notion of supernatural revelation and regard much of the Pentateuch as folklore and Hebrew storytelling.”⁷

So if it can be shown conclusively that Moses did not write The Torah, as The Holy Bible claims throughout, then The Scriptures are not unerring or Divinely inspired. They may then be relegated to the status of mere epic literature and historical fancy. In being so placed, The Holy Bible - with its moral codes for mankind and Divine plan of salvation for men and creation - become no longer binding on people. There is then no salvation of men's souls at The Cross. Nor is there a need for salvation, as there would be no Heaven or Hell. And all that The faithful Church herself has believed, confessed and practiced for two millenniums would be for naught!

This is exactly what the heart of sinful man yearns for: to be freed from moral absolutes of a

⁴ 3, The Westminster Confession, Chapter 1, Sections V.

⁵ 3, Ibid., Chapter 1, Sections VIII.

⁶ 3, Ibid., Chapter 1, Sections IX.

⁷ 4, Closson, article “Did Moses Write The Pentateuch?” On the dangerous implications of the documentary

sovereign Creator, Biblical commands, ecclesiastical authority, Church doctrine and Biblical discipline. This is modern man's saddest quest: to be free to dictate for himself what is evil and what is good in his own eyes by denying the power, truth and authority of The Word of The Maker of all things.

III. HIGHER CRITICISM THEORIES OF FORMATION OF THE TORAH

Biblical higher criticism looks for internal evidences from The Texts on "authorship, date, composition, and authority of whole books or large sections" of Scripture. Differences in anything from literary style, schemes of alternate dating or change of subject are often taken as license to dissect the unity of Scripture. In its most virulent anti-supernatural form, it begins by denying the Divine inspiration of The Bible as a presupposition, then "proceed[s] to apply critical tests to the Scriptures, in the same manner as if they were merely human productions."⁸

Such schemes of dividing The Scriptures into supposed separate documents and fragments are often heavily based on subjective criteria. Literary criticism looks for differences of literary style in Bible text, claiming different documents and authors on the presumption that one author is not capable of employing various literary styles in recording Scripture. Another arbitrary scheme is to divide Scripture - particularly The Torah - into subdocuments based on the author's use of different Names for GOD in the text. This presumes that one author is not capable of referring to GOD by different Names within a portion of Scripture.

One such theory of higher criticism of The Bible is the so-called "documentary hypothesis" of The Pentateuch, which claims that its author was not Moses, but is rather a composite of 4 different documents edited together by one or more editors in the time of the late Davidic Kingdom, the Babylonian exile or the return from exile under Ezra and Nehemiah. This hypothesis relies on "literary analysis" to divide The Torah into "J, E, D and P" source document sections, while ignoring archeological, linguistic and cultural evidence of antiquity to the contrary.⁹ This idea was pioneered by Professor E. Reuss of the University of Strasburg and published later in 1866 by his disciple H. K. Graf. Its popularity was made widespread in by a professor at the University of Gottingen, Germany - Jullius Wheelhouse - who elaborated on the theory beginning in 1883.¹⁰

Such are the outlines of this "documentary hypothesis" formation of The Torah, which claims

hypothesis of Torah formation.

⁸ 5, Reid, article "Biblical Criticism (Higher)." Introduction, paragraph 2-3.

⁹ 6, Collins, "Glossary [of Bible terms]." Entry for "[J-E-D-P] Documentary Hypothesis" of formation of The Torah.

¹⁰ 5, Reid, article "Biblical Criticism (Higher)." "Since the eighteenth century, (1) Old-Testament Criticism outside the Church," Paragraph 4.

four distinct parts written in different time periods by four writers or groups of writers, each with a uniquely different emphasis in their faith: 1) The J-document is to have been written by “a writer who used JHWH as the ‘unpronounceable Name of GOD... often translated as JEHOVAH;” 2) The E-document was supposedly written by “a writer who used Elohim as the Divine Name;” 3) The D-document is thought to have been written by “the author of the book of Deuteronomy;” 4) The P-document is held to have been created by “a writer who added material of major interest to the priesthood.”¹¹

This and related gradual formation theories of The Torah then requires later redactor or redactors, “who shaped the contributions of J, E, P and D together into the present Pentateuch.”¹² This documentary hypothesis school of thought on formation of The Torah is classically known as “the Graf-Wellhausen theory.” The four supposed documents are all dated from different ages long after Moses, thus precluding him as the author of any part of The Torah. So the J or Jahweh document is placed in “the period of the early Jewish monarchy, about 950 B.C.” The E or Eloheim document was supposedly written in “the region of the Northern Kingdom dating from about 750 BC.”¹³

The D or Deuteronomy document presumably was to have been written “in the Southern Kingdom about 650 B.C. or later” in a time when the Deuteronomical Laws were given.¹⁴ This was presumably the age of “prophetic reform under [King] Josias.”¹⁵ The P or Priestly document is relegated to the Babylonian exile or post exile return from Babylon in “the period after the fall of Israel in 587 B.C.”¹⁶ The P document is seen as “the outcome of the sacerdotal and ritual formalism” that only at this time [of the return from Babylonian captivity] began to characterize restored Judaism in The Holy Land under Ezra and Nehemiah.¹⁷ Thus the he final editor-redactor of The Torah is typically placed “around the time of Ezra or about 400 B.C.”¹⁸

IV. SUMMARY OF WELLHOUSEN THEORY CRITERIA

¹¹ 1, religioustolerance.org, article “Who Wrote The Pentateuch?” On an overview of the JEDP hypothesis of Torah formation.

¹² 1, Ibid. On the documentary hypothesis of Torah formation.

¹³ 4, Closson, article “Did Moses Write The Pentateuch?” On an explanation of the popular documentary JEDP hypothesis formation of The Torah of the Graf-Wellhausen school.

¹⁴ 4, Ibid.

¹⁵ 5, Reid, article “Biblical Criticism (Higher).” “Since the eighteenth century, (1) Old-Testament Criticism outside the Church,” Paragraph 4.

¹⁶ 4, Closson, article “Did Moses Write The Pentateuch?” On an explanation of the popular documentary JEDP hypothesis formation of The Torah of the Graf-Wellhausen school.

¹⁷ 5, Reid, article “Biblical Criticism (Higher).” “Since the eighteenth century, (1) Old-Testament Criticism outside the Church,” Paragraph 4.

¹⁸ 4, Closson, article “Did Moses Write The Pentateuch?” On an explanation of the popular documentary JEDP hypothesis formation of The Torah of the Graf-Wellhausen school.

Dillard and Longman in their 1994 book “An Introduction To The Old Testament” offer an overview of the Wellhausen criteria for dividing up The Pentateuch into these four supposed source documents that include a wider view of the theory: First, as already noted, “The use of different Divine Names, particularly YAHWEH (J) and Eloheim (E)” is the most well known criteria. Second, “the existence of doublets, that is, the same basic story that is repeated more than once, though different characters may be involved.” For example, the two dreams of Joseph are cited from GENESIS 37:5-11. These doublets “could be repeated accounts... or separate incidents serving the same purpose in the narrative context.” Third, “the use of two different names to designate the same person, tribe, or place.” Examples cited are “Reuel/Jethro; Horeb/Sinai; Jacob/Israel; Ishmaelites/Midianites.”¹⁹

Fourth, supposed variations in theology: “J is commonly characterized as portraying GOD anthropomorphically; D presents a form of retribution theology; P is replete with priestly concerns and tends to emphasize the transcendence of GOD.” Fifth, “Differences of [literary] style” in different portions of The Pentateuch. Sixth, alleged different emphasis in each of the five Books of The Torah are seen to “show progression in Israel’s theology from animism... to monotheism.” Sixth, these higher critical theories of The Pentateuch also “see a chronological progression among the sources in terms of forms of worship... [in] the issue of centralization of worship.” These theories hold that “J is unaware of centralization (EXODUS 20:24-26); D calls for it (DEUTERONOMY 12:1-26), and P assumes it (EXODUS 25-40, NUMBERS and LEVITICUS 1-9).”²⁰

V. PRESUMPTIONS OF CRITICAL THEORIES OF TORAH FORMATION

The common presumption of these theories is that all supernatural phenomenon recorded in The Bible are explainable by natural phenomenon. They grow out of an atheistic evolutionary view of human history which is borrowed from Darwin’s godless theories on biological evolution. Proponents of these theories therefore can not accept the possibility that The Scriptures are exactly what they claim to be within their pages - The unerring, Divinely inspired Word of GOD to mankind.

Closson, in a current internet article “Did Moses Write the Pentateuch,” summarizes this view: “The theory grew out of a movement to find rationalistic, natural explanations for the biblical text. Once one assumes that supernatural revelation cannot occur any other explanation must take precedent. The late dates and various authors assigned to the books allow for purely naturalistic

¹⁹ 7, Dillard and Longman, “An Introduction To The Old Testament,” p 41. On the Wellhausen criteria for dividing The Torah up into different alleged source documents.

sources. This is a textbook case of question begging. The underlying premise, that there can be no such thing as supernatural revelation, resulted in the conclusion that the Bible is not a supernaturally revealed document.”²¹

Harrison in his 2004 book “Introduction To The Old Testament” also observes this presupposition: “the Graf-Wellhausen school based its critical studies [of The Pentateuch] upon a philosophical evolutionary theory... [which follows] ...a view of Hebrew history that followed a pattern similar to that formulated by Darwin with respect to biology.” These theories then out-of-hand reject the formation of The Torah by Divine Revelation to any one man, let alone Moses. They claim instead a gradual social evolution over long time periods as the force of formation of The Torah. Hebrew history, culture and religion as embodied and recorded in The Pentateuch is then said to have evolved from simple animism, then to “simple sacrifices on family altars in the settlement period to the vastly more complex liturgical celebrations of the Priestly Code” established in the post Babylonian exile period.²²

VI. BIBLE SCRIPTURE CLAIMS MOSES WROTE THE PENTATEUCH

Repeatedly, The Torah internally claims Moses as its human author. EXODUS 24:4 says, “And Moses wrote all the words of The LORD...,” claiming direct Divine Revelation for every word that he recorded by Special Revelation.²³ NUMBERS 33:2 declares of the Israelite wanderings, “And Moses wrote their goings out according to their journeys by the commandment of The LORD...”²⁴ The Torah tells us that Moses himself - and not a future redactor or redactors hundreds or thousands of years later - was recording many of the events that he was so involved in and was an eye witness to.

DEUTERONOMY 31:25-26 records that “...Moses commanded the Levites, which bare the ark of the covenant of The LORD, saying, Take this book of the law, and put it in the side of the ark of the covenant of The LORD your GOD, that it may be there for a witness against thee.”²⁵ So here we have recorded clearly that, after Moses completed writing The Pentateuch and before he sent the people under Joshua to go into The Promised Land, he gave a completed copy to The Levites.²⁶

From outside The Torah, the Old Testament proclaims the Mosaic authorship of The Torah.

²⁰ 7, Dillard and Longman, “An Introduction To The Old Testament,” p 41.

²¹ 4, Closson, article “Did Moses Write The Pentateuch?” On an explanation of the popular documentary JEDP hypothesis formation of The Torah of the Graf-Wellhausen school.

²² 8, Harrison, “Introduction to The Old Testament.” “General Presuppositions of The Graf-Wellhausen Hypothesis,” p 506, paragraph 1.

²³ 9, KJV, EXODUS 24:4.

²⁴ 9, KJV, NUMBERS 33:2

²⁵ 9, KJV, DEUTERONOMY 31:25-26.

²⁶ 9, KJV, see also EXODUS 17:14, EXODUS 34:27-28, DEUTERONOMY 31:1-9.

JOSHUA 1:7 reads, "...observe to do according to all the law, which Moses my servant commanded thee..."²⁷ And when the Babylonian exiles returned to Jerusalem, EZRA 6:18 documents that these Israelites already had at least part - if not all - of The Torah, "And they set the priests in their divisions, and the Levites in their courses, for the service of GOD, which is at Jerusalem; as it is written in the book of Moses!"²⁸ So the Old Testament record outside The Pentateuch also documents that the ancient Israelites in The Promised Land had in their possession the written Torah long before the Babylonian exile and the return from that captivity.²⁹

Our Lord CHRIST JESUS in The Gospels continually refers to the Messianic Scripture prophecies which He was fulfilling as foretold in The Old Testament - in The Torah, The Psalms and The Prophets. CHRIST's own Words show He attributed The Torah to Moses, and that all of Old Testament prophecy is fulfilled in Himself. LUKE 24:27, 44 reads, "And beginning at Moses and all the prophets, He expounded unto them in all the Scriptures the things concerning Himself. And He said unto them, These are the words which I spake unto you, while I was yet with you, that all things must be fulfilled, which were written in the law of Moses, and in the prophets, and in the psalms, concerning Me!"³⁰

Thus The Lord rebukes the religious leaders of his day in JOHN 5:45-47, "Do not think that I will accuse you to The Father: there is one that accuseth you, even Moses, in whom ye trust. For had ye believed Moses, ye would have believed Me: for he wrote of Me. But if ye believe not his writings, how shall ye believe My words?"³¹ If JESUS CHRIST is Who He claims that He is - The Messiah and very Son of GOD Himself - He would know if Moses had not been the author of the Torah. But CHRIST clearly relies on The Torah's authenticity and cites Moses as Its author throughout all The Gospels.³²

In ACTS 26:22-23, Paul proclaims, "...I continue unto this day, witnessing both to small and great, saying none other things than those which the prophets and Moses did say should come. That CHRIST should suffer, and that He should be the first that should rise from the dead, and should shew light unto the people, and to the Gentiles."³³ Saint Paul cited what was written in The Torah about the promised coming prophet and Messiah as written by Moses when he testified of JESUS CHRIST before King Agrippa. This theme is carried forth throughout The New Testament from beginning to end - that JESUS CHRIST is The Messiah - and that He alone is the completion of The

²⁷ 9, KJV, JOSHUA 1:7

²⁸ 9, KJV, EZRA 6:18

²⁹ 9, KJV, see also JOSHUA 8:31-34, JOSHUA 23:6, JOSHUA 24:26, I KINGS 2:3, II CHRONICLES 34:14, EZRA 3:2, NEHEMIAH 8:14.

³⁰ 9, KJV, LUKE 24:27, 44.

³¹ 9, KJV, JOHN 5:45-47.

³² 9, KJV, see also MARK 12:26, JOHN 1:17, JOHN 7:19, 23, JOHN 8:5.

Old Testament Prophets and The Law written by Moses in The Pentateuch. ³⁴

VII. SOME OBJECTIONS TO THE JEDP-WELLHOUSEN THEORIES

Different literary styles: The arbitrary nature of documentary hypotheses in general and the JEDP Graf-Wilhausen theory in particular have already been alluded to. Judging one author incapable of varying his literary style - especially a man as educated as Moses a former prince of Egypt - is highly subjective. Mere variation of literary style in different parts of The Pentateuch in no way prove that there were different authors of the text. Closson states, "Regarding the various writing styles, it would be like arguing that C. S. Lewis could not possibly have written children's stories, literary critiques, science fiction, and allegorical satire; and insisting that numerous sources must have been involved. Educated as an Egyptian prince [in the very house of Pharaoh], Moses would have been exposed to many writing styles that were available during that period." ³⁵

Different names of GOD: In the same way, judging the same one author as incapable of using different Names for GOD in a text is no proof that different portions were written by different authors. Neither of these contentions prove in the least that Moses did not author The Torah. Another problem with the theory identified by Closson is that it assumes that "Hebrew authors differ from any other writers known in the history of literature in that they alone were incapable of using more than one name for GOD, or for that matter, more than one style of writing. It is interesting that the Qur'an (Koran) uses multiple Names for GOD, but few question that Muhammad was its sole author." ³⁶

Finding of The Law under King Josiah and the existence of the Samaritan Pentateuch: Jamieson in "Introduction to The Pentateuch and Historical Books" which prefaces "The Commentary Critical and Explanatory on the Whole Bible" observes the following: He states, "...the discovery in the reign of Josiah of the autograph copy which was deposited by Moses in the ark of the testimony..." documents that The Torah had already been in existence in written prior to that time. ³⁷ Further, the Samaritans possessed their own ancient Torah script. Jamieson observes of The Samaritan Pentateuch, "...appealing to the Mosaic law as the standard of their faith and worship equally with the Jews, [they] watched with jealous care over every circumstance that could affect the

³³ 9, KJV, ACTS 26:22-23.

³⁴ 9, KJV, see also ACTS 3:22, ACTS 7:38, ACTS 28:23, II PETER 1:21.

³⁵ 4, Closson, article "Did Moses Write The Pentateuch?" On an explanation of the popular documentary JEDP hypothesis formation of The Torah of the Graf-Wellhausen school.

³⁶ 4, Ibid.

³⁷ 10, Jamieson, article, "Introduction To The Pentateuch and Historical Books." Two examples of historical corroboration that Moses wrote The Torah.

purity of the Mosaic record.”³⁸

VIII. SELECTED THEORIES IN RECENT THEOLOGY JOURNAL ARTICLES

Sommer in his 1999 journal article “Reflecting on Moses: The Redaction of Numbers 11” contends that there are two separate and unrelated story lines in NUMBERS 11:4-35 unrelated to one another.³⁹ This Sommer believes proves that an unknown redactor fused these two portions of NUMBERS 11 together - a theory he reports was established a century ago. The presumption is that Moses was not capable of recording of two simultaneous series of events recorded in NUMBERS 11 interwoven with each other as they occurred. This he calls “thematic juxtaposition.” Sommer holds this as proof that Moses did not author The Torah, stating that this “suggests that Pentateuchal editors at times structured narratives to follow a logic of theme rather than one concerned with linear plot, and that [linear] narrative coherence... was not always a goal of ancient editors.”⁴⁰

He observes of NUMBERS 11:4-5, 18-24a, 31-35, “the people complain that they lack meat, provoking Moses’ aggrieved speech to GOD... GOD sends the people so much of what they crave that many of them die.” This thread Sommer labels “Moses, the people and the plague” or “the A narrative.” Of NUMBERS 11:16-17, 24b-30 Sommer states “constitute[s] another story in which GOD tells Moses to gather seventy elders, so that Moses will share his prophetic spirit...” This he labels “Moses, the elders, and prophecy” or “the B narrative.”⁴¹

As further proof, Sommer offers that The PSALMS offer versions of the A narrative of Moses, the people and the plague, as in PSALM 78, but no mention of the B narrative of Moses, the elders, and prophecy. This Sommer says is “empirical support for this source critical analysis.” Sommer further states as proof that “the A narrative contains vocabulary items and narrative elements typical of J [JEHOVAH document] texts... Many details of the B story... link it with texts typically denoted by the siglum E {Eloheim document},” citing a number of examples. He notes however that the classical JEDP documentary hypothesis is no longer fully accepted by many current proponents of higher criticism of The Bible.⁴²

Sommer concludes that his analysis “proves an exemplary case of literary indeterminacy or ambiguity: two mutually exclusive but coherent systems of reading are presented, not only in A and

³⁸ 10, Jamieson, article, “Introduction To The Pentateuch and Historical Books. Examples of references are made in the works of the prophets to the facts recorded in the books of Moses.

³⁹ 11, Sommer, article “Reflecting on Moses – The Redaction of NUMBERS 11.” Journal of Biblical Literature, 118/4, p 601-624.

⁴⁰ 11, Ibid., p 602.

⁴¹ 11, Ibid., p 604.

⁴² 11, Ibid., p 605.

B but in B read as part of A and in A read as part of B.” The text he says forms “either of two systems, but some element of the text will seem out of place.”⁴³ Yet Sommer admits that the supposed redactors who produced The Torah did not always edit texts together in a linear fashion, but on the basis of common themes. None of the materials cited, nor the theories offered, can however prove Numbers 11 as the work of a redactor, nor disprove Moses as the author of Numbers 11.

Gnuse in his 2000 journal article “Redefining The Elohist” documents the demise of the classical documentary hypothesis of the formation of The Pentateuch. He observes, “Once a well-defined source in the minds of literary critics... both the Yahwist [J document] and the Elohist [E document] have had their very existence denied by critical Biblical scholars, the same people who once gave birth to them.”⁴⁴ Gnuse reviews these recent trends: Some new theories of how The Pentateuch developed completely leave out an E document, offering a D,J and P sequence. Other current theory holds to a D, P and J sequence which “emphasize the priority of the Priestly narrative, ...augmented by the Yahwist” J document. In both theories, Torah texts formerly attributed to an E document are now attributed to portions of the J or D documents.⁴⁵

IX. IN CONCLUSION

The Divinely inspired Mosaic authorship of the first five Books of The Holy Bible is an essential foundation of the integrity of The Scriptures. Traditional Jewish and Christian doctrine have held this view for millenniums. The Law and The Prophets of The Old Testament repeatedly declare Moses as the Divinely inspired author of The Torah. Our Lord JESUS CHRIST Himself in The Gospels repeatedly confirms this, as do The Apostles in the remainder of The New Testament. Indeed, the entire Christian salvation message of The New Testament rests upon the authenticity of the Mosaic Law of The Old.

Higher critical schools of Biblical scholarship however presume as their foundation that all accounts of supernatural events in Holy Writ are impossible. They hold that all Biblical miracles may be explained away as the results of natural forces, human behavior and the Darwinistic evolutionary flow of human history and increasingly complexity of manmade religious systems. These theories all presume that Moses could not have written The Torah, and that all testimonies throughout to this effect were manufactured by a later Israelite redactor or redactors who compiled and stitched together fragmentary documents, oral traditions and a need to preserve and justify the

⁴³ 11, Sommer, article “Reflecting on Moses – The Redaction of NUMBERS 11.” Journal of Biblical Literature, 118/4, p 623.

⁴⁴ 12, Gnuse, article “Redefining The Elohist.” Journal of Biblical Literature, 119/2, p 201.

⁴⁵ 12, Ibid., p 202.

Priestly cult and Davidic kingdom and throne.

It is however quite possible to admit to small scribal clarifications in The Pentateuch texts as they were recopied over the ages and still hold to its Divinely inspired Mosaic authorship. Such phrases like “as it is to this day” and attaching later contemporary names for cities, peoples and places to outdated names may be explained as having been done for the benefit of readers of the later Kingdom, Babylonian exile or post Babylonian exile epochs. These in now way disprove Moses as the author of The Torah.

It is quite a reasonable possibility that Moses, in writing The Pentateuch, had before him some fragmentary historical and testimonial documents of antiquity. The schemes offered by documentary theories on the formation of The Torah - most well known by the idea of separate J, E, D and P documents - is however arbitrary. There is no reason to presume that Moses was incapable of referring to The Creator for instance by the different Names of JEHOVAH and Eloheim in the same portions of Torah. Nor is there any reason to separate later Torah texts into D and P documents simply because of the increasing complexity of Old Testament codes and manners of worship.

The ever changing forms of documentary theory formation of The Torah are themselves an indication of the inconclusiveness of such schools of Biblical higher criticism. No conclusive evidence by these theories have been able to prove that The Pentateuch was authored by a late Kingdom, Babylonian exile or post-exile return redactor or redactors. Nor have they been able to disprove Moses as the author of The first five Books of The Old Testament in its essential form. Biblical higher criticism can offer no conclusive reason for faithful men to doubt the Divinely inspired nature of The Pentateuch and its Mosaic authorship, which are clearly testified to throughout both The Old and New Testaments of The Holy Bible.

X. REFERENCES

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