

THE SOURCES OF THE HEXATEUCH

J, E, and P, in the text of the American Standard
Edition, according to the consensus of
scholarship, edited with intro-
ductions and notes

By

EDGAR SHEFFIELD BRIGHTMAN, PH.D.

Professor of Ethics and Religion in Wesleyan University



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To
ALBERT CORNELIUS KNUDSON, PH.D.
TO WHOM THIS BOOK AND ITS WRITER
OWE MUCH

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PREFACE

EXPERIENCE in the classroom at Nebraska Wesleyan and Wesleyan Universities has shown that there is need for an edition of the documents constituting the main sources of the Hexateuch. It is impossible to teach the Old Testament historically without frequent reference to J, E, and P. Students become interested in the problem and wish to read the sources, only to discover that the desired documents are not available.

The Sources of the Hexateuch is an attempt to supply this need by editing the documents J, E, and P according to the consensus of English, Scotch, Dutch, German, French, Swiss, and American scholarship. Every Bible student, whether he accepts the results of criticism or not, will find here a conspectus presenting the critical view in concrete form, and thus be able more accurately to estimate the truth or error in the theory presented.

No new translation and no new theories are presented here. This is a synthesis with no new thesis. The aim is not polemic, although the writer frankly accepts the critical position. The purpose of the book will have been attained if the outcome be a more intensive scientific and religious study of the Hexateuch.

The writer desires to express his thanks for encouragement and suggestions bearing on various aspects of the book to numerous colleagues at Wesleyan University, notably to Professors Heidel, Armstrong, and Conley; and, among other scholars, in particular to Professors Knudson, of Boston; Fowler, of Brown; Bacon, of Yale; Paton and Nourse, of Hartford; and Eiselen of Garrett.

EDGAR SHEFFIELD BRIGHTMAN.

Middletown, Connecticut.

INTRODUCTION

1. EXPLANATION OF THE GENERAL PLAN OF THE BOOK.

Scholars have been at work now for over a century on the problem of the analysis of the Hexateuch—the first six books of the Old Testament. An enormous amount has been written, and many widely varying opinions expressed. But out of the debate there has arisen a gradually increasing body of results on which scholars in general agree, based on the view that the Hexateuch as we now have it is made up of an interweaving of various older writings (called documents or sources).

There is no doubt that such interweaving as this theory presupposes did actually occur in Bible times. It is proven by a comparison of Chronicles with its sources in Samuel and Kings; or of Matthew and Luke with their source, Mark; or of Tatian's Diatessaron with the four Gospels. The case of the Hexateuch, however, differs in one respect from the instances cited: whereas in the illustrations we still have both the compilation (Chronicles, Matthew, the Diatessaron) and some at least of the earlier sources on which they are based (Samuel, Kings, Mark), in the case of the Hexateuch the earlier sources no longer exist as separate writings. The sources must be reconstructed by criticism.

It is not within the province of the present book to give an account of the methods used in determining the analysis into sources. Some hints will be found in the later outline of the history of criticism; but for a full discussion the reader is referred to Eiselen, *The Books of the Pentateuch*, or Driver, *Introduction to the Literature of the Old Testament*. We confine ourselves to the exposition of results rather than methods.

The generally accepted results designate by letters* the various sources of the Hexateuch as follows:

J (the Jahvistic or Judæan Narrative), written 850 B. C.

E (the Elohist or Ephraimitic narrative), written 750 B. C.

* The letters are used indifferently to indicate either the documents or their authors.

D (Deuteronomy in its original form), written 650, published 621 B. C.

P (the Priestly Code), 500 B. C.

It is agreed that J and E were combined by Rje (a redactor, reviser, or editor), about 650 (his finished work being called JE); that JE and D were combined by Rd, who also made additions to D, about 600-550 (his finished work being called JED); and that the Pentateuch was put into substantially its present form by Rp, who united JED with P, about 400. Since 400 only one important addition was made, namely, Gn. 14, perhaps about 300, or even later.

Such in main outline is the critical view of the Hexateuch on which scholars the world over are in general agreed.

It is the aim of this book to present in usable form the restored documents, J, E, and P, distinguishing in each document the work of the various redactors. D is omitted because the book of Dt. may be read consecutively in any Bible, whereas J, E, and P stand in such intricate relations to each other that it is all but impossible to form any conception of their connection or their unity without such editing as is here undertaken. An attempt is made to represent objectively and accurately the consensus of scholarship, the assured results of criticism.

2. DEFINITION OF THE TERM "CONSENSUS OF SCHOLARSHIP."

Statements made in the previous section need further definition. There are many intelligent and educated Christians—even some scholars—who do not accept the critical analysis, with its denial of the Mosaic authorship of the Pentateuch. How, then, can it be said that "all scholars agree" on the results?

By a scholar or a critic in this book is meant one who (1) has made an expert and intensive study of the problem of the Hexateuch, being familiar both with the Hebrew text itself and with the range of scholarly discussion on all sides of debated questions, and (2) has published his results in monographs that have been recognized by scholars in general as worthy of attention.* Practically no such monographs have been recently

* It is to be noted that practically all the men fulfilling this description are to be found in the ranks of Protestant Christianity. Roman Catholics have not made any significant contributions in recent years; Greek Catholics and non-Christians, never.

published by scholars that do not accept the critical standpoint.

By the expression "all scholars agree" is meant that the scholars whose works have been consulted (except Eerdmans and his school) are at one in support of the opinion in question save perhaps for possible variations in minor matters that do not affect the significant content of the documents. Practically all the important critics since Wellhausen have been consulted.

3. THE EXISTENCE OF A CONSENSUS AMONG SCHOLARS.

Many might be inclined to deny the existence of any substantial agreements among critics. It is true that if one is centering attention on differences in minor detail, a bewildering array of contradictions might be marshaled. So too a non-Christian approaching the writings of Christian theologians and philosophers in a prejudiced and polemic mood, might easily discover so many differences that he would be tempted to say, "I cannot be a Christian, for there is no agreement among Christians as to what Christianity is." But there is a fundamental thread of unity binding together all Christians, despite differences. So too is there among scholars a remarkable consensus.

To the existence of such a consensus scholars themselves testify. In 1887 Briggs wrote, "I doubt whether there is any question of scholarship whatever in which there is greater agreement among scholars than in this question of the literary analysis of the Hexateuch." Bacon quotes Briggs with evident approval (*Genesis of Genesis*, pp. 24, 25). George Foote Moore, in 1892, wrote to Bacon (*op. cit.*), "There is no reason to think that the general results on which critics now agree will be overturned." In 1893 Addis reported (p. x) that he had worked out his analysis independently, and that when Kautzsch's work appeared in Germany the two were found in "constant agreement even in minute detail."

A. Lods, in the new French Bible, 1916, speaks of the critical results as "conclusions which have forced themselves on Hebraists of every school."

It is sometimes said that the present debate between the so-called "Wellhausen School" and the "History of Religion School" presupposes the rejection of the critical view of the Hexateuch. Such is not the case.

In 1910, Sellin, a leader of the conservative wing of the "History of Religion School," introduced his account of J with the statement, "Without going into a hair-splitting analysis, we present the sections of the Pentateuch which, with almost complete agreement, are assigned to J." Gressmann, another critic of the newer school, said in 1911, introducing his lectures in OT Theology: "We are in the main at one with Wellhausen in the criticism of the Pentateuch. The matter is in principle settled. There remain only the problems regarding the history of the material itself."

In 1912, Smend, in his important and suggestive study of the narrative portions of the Hexateuch, asserts that "the main outlines of Wellhausen's Hexateuchal criticism will in the future, as in the past, be shown to be valid; . . . his results have been almost unanimously accepted."

Even Eerdmans, the successor of Kuenen at Leyden, free lance among critics, destroyer and radical, admits that the consensus of scholars was so complete as to cause him to hesitate long before raising his protest; while Kittel has now become a convert to the Grafian view.

The consensus exists. It is not a matter of nationality, or theological prejudice, or "schools," or religion, or irreligion, but simply of the overwhelming and convincing weight of the evidence. It is a consensus that is not merely "in general" or "on the whole," but extends, with surprising agreement, into the detailed analysis of verses and half verses. *A priori* it seems inconceivable that such accurate division of sources could be made; or that any number of scholars would agree on the same analysis. A study of the present volume will show the unwarranted character of such assumptions.

It is obvious that the agreement would not be equally unanimous at every point. In general, the separation of J and E is not so certain as the separation of JE and P; the analysis in Ex. and Nu. is more complicated and difficult than

in Gn. Even now it is not yet safe to separate J and E in detail all through Josh. But in spite of these difficulties, the agreements, even in hotly debated passages, greatly outweigh the differences.

4. HOW THE CONSENSUS IS INDICATED IN THE TEXT.

In the following pages the text of each document (according to the American Standard Version: used by permission) is printed consecutively, and is divided into sections for convenience of reference.

In cases where "all scholars agree" as to the analysis, the text is printed without remark. In cases where there are any significant differences, footnotes usually mention the differences only, implying that "all" scholars not mentioned accept the analysis as printed. Occasionally in much debated passages the full list of authorities consulted is given. Reference to the bibliography will indicate what critics have been taken into account.

Redactional material (Rje, Rd, Rp, or merely R when the identification is not certain) is indicated by the use of smaller type. Less attention is paid to giving a complete account of differences with respect to this material.

5. A BRIEF OUTLINE OF THE HISTORY OF THE CRITICISM OF THE HEXATEUCH.

Astruc, physician to Louis XIV, in 1753 discovered variations in the use of the names "Jehovah" and "Elohim," that led him to distinguish two main documents in the Pentateuch (the first, or Elohist, our P and E; the second, or Jahvistic, our J); but he did not question the Mosaic authorship.

Ilgen 1798 was the first to separate P and E in the Elohist source.

Vater 1802ff., abandoning the documentary theory in favor of a "fragmentary hypothesis," raised doubts regarding the Mosaic authorship.

De Wette 1806 established the date of the publication of Dt. as 621 on the basis of 2K. 22-23, and regarded the entire Pentateuch as a development. His view is still accepted.

Stähelin 1830 offered the "supplementary hypothesis," which made his "Elohists" (P), the oldest material, and viewed "J" and "E" as later supplementations thereto.

Hupfeld 1853 held that J, E, and P are independent sources, and that J in particular did not know P. This view is still held.

Graf 1866 showed that P was postexilic. This discovery was epoch-making.

Kuenen 1869 accepted Graf's ideas, and carried them further.

Wellhausen 1876 built still further on the same foundation, and created a systematic interpretation of Israelitic history and religion on the basis of the analysis of the Hexateuch into J, E, D, and P (following Knobel and Nöldeke in his analysis of P).

Since Wellhausen no essentially new contribution has been made. Wellhausen's historical and religious interpretations have been subjected to vigorous attack, but, with few exceptions, scholars agree that he was usually right in his analysis and in his dating of the documents.

6. PRESENT DEBATE AMONG CRITICS.

In the main there is agreement among critics on the subjects taken up in this volume.

There is, however, a certain amount of difference due to varying opinions on—

a. The exact nature and amount of the redactional material. Smend, for example, holds that Rje rewrote his sources less extensively than Wellhausen had thought.

b. The question as to whether J and E as restored by criticism are unified and consistent, or whether they are the work of several hands. Most critics lay stress on at least two strata in E, E¹ and E²; but Smend holds to the unity of E and separates J into J¹ and J², a separation already recognized by most scholars in Gn. 1-11. But these stratifications within the documents are relatively unimportant in comparison with the larger problems, and little account is taken of them in the present volume.

c. Differences on the part of a few with reference to the dat-

ing of the documents. Proksch and Sellin put J in the United Kingdom; Smend dates E 700-650. In some measure such differences will affect a critic's conception of the nature and scope of a document.

Over against these relatively nonessential differences there have been some scholars that have made a more fundamental attack on the critical position. Dillmann, while agreeing on the whole in analysis, long dissented with reference to P; he defended the preexilic date of P. But he finally came to doubt his position (so Smend). Still more negative was Klostermann's result; but his counter-analysis has found almost no approval among scholars, and we may leave it out of account in our present study.

Certain conservative theologians, fearing in the analysis an irreverent attack on inspiration, also oppose it (e. g., in the articles on the various books of the Hexateuch in *The International Standard Bible Encyclopædia*). Such polemic attacks do not lend themselves to fruitful correlation with the plan of this work.

Specific mention should be made of Wiener and Dahse, who hold that the analysis is impossible on account of the uncertainty of the MT (Hebrew text of the OT) as compared with the LXX (Greek translations). They insist that the LXX proves the use of the divine name to be no safe criterion for the separation of the sources (which critics would generally admit). But Wiener and Dahse have not published a systematic study of the analysis, so that their views are not accessible for the present purpose.

Eerdmans is the most important opponent of the critical position. Wiener has said, "The year 1908 saw the beginning of a new critical development which makes it very difficult to speak positively of modern critical views." Wiener apparently has little regard for the works of McNeile 1908, Sellin 1910, Skinner 1910, Steuernagel 1912, Smend 1912, Driver (new ed.) 1914, and Eichrodt 1916—all in substantial agreement on the critical analysis; but he had in mind the influence exerted by Eerdmans since 1908, when the first "Alttestamentliche Studien" appeared.

It is sometimes said that Eerdmans has overthrown the Wellhausen position. He agrees with the critical school in only one or two points. He recognizes that the Code of the Covenant (Ex. 20²²-23³³) is a separate and ancient collection of laws; he accepts De Wette's view of Dt. as introducing centralization of worship in 621; and he regards the Pentateuch as composite and mostly late. But he denies the unity of either J, E, or P in any sense; holds that many passages universally regarded as composite are really unified; denies the existence of stylistic and literary differences among the "documents"; and for his general conception returns to a sort of combination of Vater's Fragmentary Hypothesis and Stähelin's Supplementary Hypothesis.

According to Eerdmans, the word "Elohim" (God) is to be treated as a plural (esp. in Gn.), and is indicative of polytheism in Israel down to 621. He is in no sense a defender of the traditional view, except that the "E" Decalogue and CC may be Mosaic. He attacks everyone that has preceded him. No one is on the right track. In almost every direction previous thought must be abandoned and entirely new hypotheses created.

On the surface such a view has little to commend it. Nevertheless, Eerdmans repays careful study. He makes many brilliant and suggestive exegetical conjectures, and, after all, is not so utterly far from the established view as one might infer. In many passages he agrees with the critical analysis both as to the fact of composition and as to grouping of verses. For example, in Genesis, he separates all of the "P" material from "JE" except 14 verses and 6 half verses (cf. Eichrodt). This is a remarkable tribute to the correctness of the critical results. In the latter part of Gn. and the first of Ex. he finds a "Jacob recension" which is polytheistic (dated 933-700), and an "Israel recension," which has pre-Deuteronomic, post-Deuteronomic and postexilic elements. These recensions do not correspond to J, E, or P, but the subdivisions of each often follow the lines of cleavage agreed on by criticism.

"P" he subdivides into "learned," postexilic glosses (here agreeing with the critical dating in many cases) and valuable