

THE DOCUMENTARY HYPOTHESIS

WHY STUDY IT?

(1) MODERN BIBLICAL
SCHOLARSHIP

(2) HISTORICAL
CONSCIOUSNESS

(3) CRITICAL AWARENESS

FOUR SOURCES
OR DOCUMENTS

J: c. 10TH CENTURY B.C.E.
JAHWIST – JUDAHITE
“SECULAR”/IMPERIAL

E: 9th CENTURY AFTER 922 B.C.E
ELOHIST – EPHRAIMITE
PROPHETIC

P: 8TH? – 5TH CENTURIES
PRIESTLY / LEVITICAL

D: 7TH CENTURY – C. 621 B.C.E
HISTORICAL / PROPHETIC

J

c. 10TH CENTURY B.C.E.

JAHWIST – JUDAHITE

“SECULAR”/IMPERIAL

MONARCHIC

PROBABLY BY SOMEONE

IN THE HOUSE OF DAVID

IN THE SOUTHERN KINGDOM

(JUDAH)

AROUND THE TIME WHEN

THE NORTHERN KINGDOM

(EPHRAIM/SAMARIA/ISRAEL)

SPLIT FROM THE SOUTH

POSSIBLY DURING THE REIGN

OF REHOBOAM?

NOTABLE J STORIES

EDEN

CAIN & ABEL

FLOOD

ABRAHAM'S CALLING

JAHWEH SAID TO BE
ANTHROPOMORPHIC

STORIES EMPHASIZE HIS
PERSONAL RELATIONSHIP
WITH ABRAHAM & OTHERS

E

9th CENTURY AFTER 922 B.C.E
ELOHIST – EPHRAIMITE
PROPHETIC
ANTI-MONARCHIC
ASSOCIATED WITH A CULT
CENTERED IN SHILOAH
HOSTILE TO JEROBOAM
& HIS SUCCESSORS

TWO NOTABLE E STORIES:
THE BINDING OF ISAAC (22)
JACOB WRESTLING WITH
ELOHIM (32)

J&E

IN 721 B.C.E. ISRAEL FELL
TO THE ASSYRIAN EMPIRE; A
SOUTHERN EDITOR STITCHED
NARRATIVE MATERIAL FROM
THE ELOHIST TEXT INTO THE
JAHWIST NARRATIVE,
PRODUCING SOME DOUBLETS:
E.G. ABRAHAM PASSING OFF
SARAH AS HIS “SISTER”

A MORE COMPLEX EXAMPLE:
THE BINDING OF ISAAC ENDS
WITH AN INTERVENTION BY
JAHWEH

P

8TH? – 5TH CENTURIES

PRIESTLY / LEVITICAL

BEGUN DURING THE REIGN OF
HEZEKIAH AFTER 715 B.C.E.?

MOSTLY LEGAL MATERIAL

(EXODUS–LEVITICUS–NUMBERS)

A FEW TYPICAL STORIES:

GENESIS CH. 1

NOAH & THE FLOOD

A DISTINCTIVE VERSION OF

ELOHIM'S

COVENANT

WITH ABRAHAM

D

7TH CENTURY – C. 621 B.C.E
HISTORICAL / PROPHETIC
SIMPLE THEORY OF HISTORY:
EXPLAINING THE
BABYLONIAN CAPTIVITY:
JUDAH/ISRAEL DID NOT DO
WHAT IS RIGHT IN THE EYES
OF YAHWEH ELOHIM

THE DEUTERONOMIC
DECALOGUE (DEUT. 5:12-15)
PROVIDES A DIFFERENT
RATIONALE FOR SABBATH
OBSERVANCE

R

(REDACTOR)

ALL OF THE FORGOING TEXTS
WERE FINALLY COMBINED
INTO A SINGLE,
MORE OR LESS COHERENT
NARRATIVE

DURING AND AFTER THE
BABYLONIAN EXILE

(587-538)

POSSIBLY BY THE PRIEST
EZRA