

of the Pentateuch was that God gave the Word and Moses wrote it.

But in spite of what the Bible says, today it is commonly taught that Moses did not write the first five books of the Bible. In fact, no one wrote them (so goes the claim) — they just “fell together” out of the tradition of Israel over the years.

About 1000 B.C. Northern Palestine supplied a series of legends concerning God, Jehovah, and His people. This material is called “J” because God is called “Jehovah.” Slightly later Southern Palestine gave a similar series about the God Elohim, known as “E.” These were soon combined with those of “J” — and are mostly found in Genesis/Exodus. About 625 B.C. King Josiah and the leaders in Jerusalem forged a power tool to govern the masses: a book of laws known to us as “Deuteronomy” (meaning “second law”). The men, using the name of Moses, pretended their work was from ancient times. Finally, the Jerusalem priesthood compiled a section of priestly laws (including much of Leviticus and some parts of Genesis, Exodus, and Numbers), called “P.” All of this material became the Pentateuch about 400 B.C.

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The reasons behind this speculation are summarized as follows:

1. Different names are used for God.
2. Statements are made by Moses of which he could have had no knowledge.
3. Parallel accounts of the same events are given in the Pentateuch. It is asserted that these accounts, while discussing the same event, often contradict one another and seem to be unaware of the existence of the other.
4. There are complete narratives that indicate separate sources. The “J” account, for instance, gives a “complete” view of Israel’s