

If the Old Testament is not what it claims to be, the erroneous concept of the New Testament writers concerning it would doom their credibility for anything else they might have to say. The roots of the New are so emphatically set in the Old that if the criticism is right, there is no justification for our existence as "the church". The student who is concessive in Old Testament criticism must soon concede the whole scope of faith and doctrine.

#### 4. Application of the Theory to the Old Testament Canon in Detail

In keeping with the national aspirations mentioned earlier, the critical theory of the canon finds it growing somewhat along these lines.

##### a. The Pentateuch

The Pentateuch represents the oldest part of the canon. The concept accorded to it is that of "Torah"...**law**. As such it is foundational to all else. The Pentateuch is composed of redacted documents identified basically as J, E., D, and P. These documents may be composed of excerpts and fragments of other documents...all of which makes the Pentateuch a very "crosswordlike" production. We note the following in the general concept:

**J**...as a source document dates from about 850 BC. It portrays the humble beginnings of the nation in its slow growth and final triumph under the leadership of Jehovah. J is more of an epic than a consistent faith account...but it takes people to their roots, as we might say it.

**E**...dates from about 750 and originates in the northern Israelitish territory before the fall of Samaria. Like J it is more an epic but uses the name Elohim and combines Canaanite tradition with the Israelite memory. Many scholars see another document in E and give it a southern origination calling it S or E-2. Both E and J talk about the patriarchs and are simply traditional in the manner of folk-hero tales.

While J and E are derived from separate sources and are independent of one another, both glamorize the traditional history of the nation. They reflect the varying backgrounds of the Habiru as some went north and some went south. Both are dependent upon oral tradition but the exact degree is unknown. The supernatural