

(5) Ewald (1803-1875)

The most dominant figure in the field before Wellhausen, Ewald sponsored two views on the matter.

The first is known as the supplementary hypothesis in which there is a foundational document, called E, and a supplementer called J. This supplementer is used, to put it crudely, to fill in the gaps. This work dated from the 10th-11th centuries and the order of material was still essentially that of Eichhorn. Moses may well have been responsible to the whole...for some of it in actual content there is great unity and purpose. But for the finished and final form only a supplementer can account.

About 1843 Ewald propagated the crystallization hypothesis which argued that the older scraps of material, the primitive documents, that is, were helpless before time and the criticism or doubt of the people. Therefore they slowly melted into a form not so bound by time and acceptable to the nation. The Pentateuch crystallized.

When you are reading Keil and Delitzsch you will notice many references to Ewald...both pro and con. He was distinctly more conservative than many of his contemporaries but yet had a bit of the freedom his contemporaries used in the treatment of history and creedalism. His influence was strong and so he is often treated in K and D and Hengstenberg, as well.

The interpreter of Ewald in the English world was Bishop Colenso (1814-1883) whose following of the documentary hypothesis led him into challenges of orthodoxy in the Anglican church and with American ecclesiastics.

(6) Hupfeld (1796-1866)

The last name in this part of our journey, Hupfeld had an appreciation of the revelatory character of the Old Testament and suggested a theory that is often called the modified document theory. In it the idea is that J was not supplementary but represented a modification on and of the original. E-1 ended at Genesis 20 with E-2 continuing thereafter. J and D were blended in so that the final document of the redactors was a modified form of the original with these added notes.