

(2) The arrangement of documents

The immediate upshoot of this was that the first literature in the Pentateuch...in arrangement... did not need to be the "first" literature in production. As the first accounts of Genesis showed a very mature and developed view of God, it followed that it had to be a later literature--one developed after the more primitive expressions of God. The traditional dating of Eichhorn was set aside. The search grew along lines of how the various documents in the Old Testament showed the development of the religious culture of Israel and the growth of the national image. The concept allowed human reason full sway over the Old Testament (and later the New Testament as well) and made the growth of religious ideas constant with other aspects of culture as they were then understood. The magic of the suggestion took the scholarly world by storm and has remained, with some basic revision, as the main idea of the critical expressions. As indicated earlier when noticing the canonical ideas of critical minds, the development was on this line.

J...850 BC, perhaps a bit earlier
E...750
R/JE...probably 650
D...622
R/JED...550
P...500-450
R/JEDP...about 400

The simple key is that the material is divided into sources along the concepts of Eichhorn and other steps in literary analysis and then the documents are ranged in the order in which they show the development of the religious ideals. That this development is then seen as substantially correct (the way it should have been) is used to argue for the correctness of the development. The "better" the picture of God and his dealings the later the document. What we will press for is the simple idea that proper development in a faith revealed by God begins with a very clear picture of whom He is and what His powers are...and then proceeds to a more detailed analysis of what He wants us to do.

4. Examination of the critical theories for Pentateuchal analysis

In this section we seek to take the arguments for both