

So when we consider the evidence and material at hand, we conclude that the use of the names cannot provide an accurate method of division of the basic material. It is the simplest and clearest idea but is still filled with problems, overlappings and difficulties.

(d) Effect of the Divine names argument on the integrity and understanding of Scripture.

/1/ It promotes arbitrary division of the material

We can see this best in observing how a simple and easily understood passage is cut into several portions. Note Genesis 20:22-24:

22a (P) And God remembered Rachel...

22b (J) And God hearkened to her and opened her womb.

23 (E) And she conceived and bare a son; and said: God hath taken away my reproach!

24 (J) And she called his name Joseph, and said: The Lord shall add to me another son.

The concept of God's remembering stamps 22a as P while 22b is J as it is thought to be a repetition of the first line and cannot be E as it parallels a thought in v. 27. The resultant text is this:

J...God opened her womb and she called his name Joseph; and said: The Lord shall all to me another son.

E...And she conceived and bare a son and said: God hath taken away my reproach.

P...And God remembered Rachel.

This does provide a very nice guessing game for who said what and when but it does not do much to illustrate or explain the text...and certainly makes the credibility of the text a thing of wonder.