

## 5. Further Trends in the development of critical ideas

These notes supplement briefly material from the foundations course etc.

### a. Oral tradition and form criticism

The ideas arise largely from the understanding of Gunkel and have been variously interpreted by others, Von Rad being one of the best known. The idea is that the original material, whatever it was, circulated orally for perhaps centuries. When the time came for writing the particular literary form that was travelling in the mentalities, it was written to meet an existing need. The literary material was not created at that time...but the circulating oral material was formed in a written form for the particular situation. If you study the material you can learn from it know something of the situation in which it originated. There is no sense of falsity in the material at this point. If it is not original in the life and literary activity of Moses, that is not important...it did have a real beginning in the life of the nation and the oral forms explain the growth and diversity of ideas.

If the oral concepts took into view inspiration, etc., they could have an element of fact in them. It is amazing how literature may be known rather uniformly in a in a non-literate society. And even in a literate society some literature may be just oral or memorative. I will likely give some examples of same. But this is not the sort of oral tradition suggested by most of the holders of the view. Most of them are looking for a humanistic explanation for the Scripture, not a means of revelation.

### b. The Kingly Cult and Kingship of Yahweh

Coming basically with the thinking of Pedersohn, et al, it regarded the ancient narratives as means of showing how Jah was the king of the nation and its history (the nation's) had to be explained in terms of his kingship and suzerainty. Thus the law and the prophets are expressions of the single will and mind. Jah is coronated, so to speak, by the cult and they have their veracity only through what he has given them. The Wellhausen idea of primitive sources is much less important although all these groups argue much for partition and some for development.

The role of the cult is only assumed or postulated and not demonstrated in the history of Israel.