

of the document. For some of it the author was an eye witness but for other matter he was the recipient of some sort of information outside and beyond himself. We may not know how he received it, but having received it, he has structured it into a harmony with the material he actually saw and experienced. As one reads through the body of the material one is aware of some differences (such as the change of person, etc.) that are reflected in the life of the author. But the harmony of presentation is strikingly uniform.

c. Marks of Literary Unity

A number of features demonstrate the striking literary unity of the Pentateuch and we are enabled to mention a few.

(1) Centrality of Character

The Pentateuch is built around a group of characters...some are better developed and some less. Among the more developed are Abraham, Jacob, Joseph, Moses, Aaron, etc. One will notice that while all of these are marked with their own unique personality adjustments, the means in which they are developed: God's call, their own hesitation, their proof of individual inability, the administration of special grace, the coming to maturity and the summary of life deeds are given rather common expression.

Much may be said for the way in which the characters are developed and the consistency they portray to the original presentation. Although they grow with experience and time, Abraham, Jacob, etc., are virtually predictable in their various responses: knowing them in the initial stages, we know what they will do when a given point of challenge is presented.

This ability to show the totality of character is no mean thing and it is one of the wonders of the Bible that it shows all men in the full but especially these men who are the narrative heroes of the ancient literature. But note that the plots are built on them and not vice versa...there is no indication of a cultic formula as being the center of Israel's life at any point of time.