

originally each of them using a different divine name but going along parallel. We notice, however, that the Graf-Wellhausen theory breaks this up because after about Genesis 20, most of the passages that have God are not considered to belong to the same document as Genesis 1 but to a different document which in most other regards is more like the Jehovah document than it is like the P document. We notice that the criterion is almost entirely confined to the book of Genesis because after Exodus 6:3 P uses Jehovah almost exclusively.

The first impression a person gets is that you can just divide up the whole Pentateuch according to divine names. Nevertheless, it is just not so. In Genesis 3:5 you have the name God used and we ask ourselves, how can that be, how can he use the name Elohim?

From our viewpoint it is not difficult to explain. Jehovah is being talked about in these three chapters – God and His relationship with man; God the Redeemer; God the One, Who has this interest in His people. But in verse 3 the serpent speaks and the serpent does not use the word that reminds her of this friendly relationship to man, but uses the term which simply refers to God as the great powerful Creator of the universe. The serpent say, “Has Elohim said?” From our viewpoint there is no difficulty. But from the viewpoint of the critic, there is.

Could you explain it by saying that the author uses the term Elohim because he would not want to put the term Jehovah in the mouths of serpents, so that here he uses a term which has a different meaning? Well, once you recognize that terms may be used that have a different meaning, you greatly interfere with the whole value of it as a clue for division. They do not like to do that. So we find that in this commentary on Genesis by Professor John Skinner of Cambridge, where in Genesis 3:3 it uses the name Elohim, he says that the use of the name Elohim is commonly explained by the analogy of other passages where the name Jehovah is avoided in conversation with heathen or where the contrast between the divine and the human is reflected upon. He gives a reference for each one but says that J’s usage in such cases is not uniform and that it is doubtful what is the true explanation here. Then he refers back to page 53, where he has a further discussion of it.