

just ridicule the critics, although they can just as well ridicule your view! This is not quite the same as to pick out the weak points and stress them, which can sometimes be so close in appearance to ridicule that it is hard to distinguish. One way to strengthen belief in the unity of the Pentateuch is to pick just a few weak points in the theory and go after them hammer and tongs – but I think you should have intelligence enough to be able to do that for yourself. I do not think it is necessary for me to take two or three hours here in simply pointing to demonstrative weak points and dwelling upon them. I am interested in giving you an understanding of the weak points of the theory, but when I mention them very briefly that should be sufficient. On the other hand, I am trying to go into the strong points of the theory at greater length so that you will be able yourself to see just how strong or how lacking in strength each is. In other words, we want to study it – not just to convince you that it is wrong.

C. The Argument from Parallel Passages

To some extent this is the same argument as IV. B. But it also involves material that is quite distinct and additional. If there was nothing else we would just assume it under the previous head:

Continuous Narrative. The theory goes that here you have a complete story and there you have a complete story. Each of them stands alone. If each of them gives you a complete story of the same thing, there is a parallel among them. So we are interested in examining different parts and seeing how parallel they really are, and we are interested in seeing whether some points that are omitted from one or the other can be omitted without any loss of continuity or whether there is a definite loss. However, the argument from parallel passages goes much further than that. It claims that you have in each of the documents a repetition of the main features of the other, but with this repetition often given in such a way as to show there was some confusion, as the two came to be combined. That is, if you have the same story told in such different ways then only one could be right, if either one could; that there is a sharp discrepancy where you have it in the Pentateuch as two distinct stories, when actually it is merely a confused presentation of the same thing. This could easily happen. There is nothing strange about the idea that such might be the case, but we ask,