3) The theory rests ultimately on the idea that the Pentateuch can be divided up into a number of interlaced documents, and that these documents can be shown to have had an original separate existence.

We shall not fully examine the first two points, since the subject of this discussion is Higher Criticism rather than theories of religious development. We shall only note that most of those present scholars who consider Wellhausen's ideas of the documents as established fact admit that it is no longer possible to hold to a unilinear idea of evolution such as he proposed. This change is largely the result of archaeology. Wellhausen had shown no interest in the few important archaeological discoveries that were made before 1878, and since that time the available archaeological material has been multiplied many times. A number of great ancient civilizations have been unearthed, and it is now clearly established that in the time of Moses there were highly developed religious systems with rituals fully as complex as that described in the Pentateuch. There were also legal systems fully as complex as that given by Moses. The system that God revealed through Moses was far superior, ethically and morally, to anything the ancient world produced, but it was not beyond the comprehension of people of the time. There is no basis for thinking of the Israelites as utterly primitive, or for believing that such a gradual development occurred as the Wellhausen theory maintains. The developmental feature of Wellhausen's theory is largely laid aside by many of the scholars who still accept his division of documents.