

DUPLICATIONS = DOCUMENTS?

Since variations in the Pentateuch's literary style need not imply the multiple document theory, and since historically the Pentateuch could have been written in Moses' time, two major supports for the documentary hypothesis may give way. But there is a third support. Advocates of the multidocument hypothesis maintain that duplications in the Pentateuch indicate several documentary sources. Some words or events seem to be recorded twice or even three times. Sometimes, according to the theory, the variant accounts have been inserted separately by the redactor (as the supposed two creation accounts); and sometimes they have been woven together into a continuous narrative (as the supposed two flood accounts). Many claim that these various accounts, representing the various documents behind the Pentateuch, cause many duplications -- and even contradictions -- in the present first five books of the Bible.

It is the purpose of this chapter, in the light of the foregoing discussion, to show that the most commonly used duplications in the Pentateuch do not contain contradictions, and need not imply the multidocumentary hypothesis. Rather, such duplications would be expected in ancient Oriental literature, and do occur in writings of undisputed integrity.

1.
X. The Creation

There are said to be two separate accounts, J and P, each with its peculiar characteristics.