

THE MIGHTY ACTS OF GOD by Arnold B. Rhodes. Covenant Life Curriculum.

7. The law of the sanctuary varies. According to Exodus 20:24 an altar may be set up in various places, while according to Deuteronomy 12:14 sacrifice is to be offered at only one place.

8. The law concerning slaves also varies (Exodus 21:2-11; Deut. 15:12-18; Lev. 25:39-55).

9. There are differences in language and style, which cannot be accounted for simply in terms of the differences in subject matter. The mountain of the covenant is sometimes called Sinai, and other times Horeb. Moses' father-in-law is variously named Reuel, Hobab, and Jethro. The pre-Israelite occupants of Canaan are called both Canaanites and Amorites. Both prophetic and priestly emphases are present.

The four major documents are usually referred to as JEDP and are characterized as follows: J is dated as a written document somewhere between 950 B.C. and 850 B.C. It is found chiefly in Genesis and Exodus, and receives its name from the divine name Yahweh or Jahweh, because in this document this name is used from the earlier times. The style is simple and powerful, exhibiting a fondness for anthropomorphism (that is, speaking of God as if he were a man). The primary interest of the writer is in the South (Judah).

E is dated between 850 B.C. and 750 B.C. It also is found chiefly in Genesis and Exodus, and receives its name from the divine name Elohim, because this name is used for God prior to the time of Moses. The language is less anthropomorphic than J's, and the writer demonstrates a special interest in the northern tribes (Ephraim) and in dreams and angels.

D is dated in the seventh century B.C. and is essentially synonymous with Deuteronomy. It places great stress upon the purity of Israel's religion. Simultaneously it is very anti-Canaanite and deeply humanitarian. Sacrifice is permitted at only one sanctuary. All members of the tribe of Levi are admitted to the altar to serve as priests. The doctrine of God's electing love is especially strong. D sets forth the blessing-and-curse view of history; that is, obedience to God's commandments issues in the divine blessing, disobedience in the divine curse.

P is dated between 600 B.C. and 500 B.C., and is found in Genesis, Exodus, Leviticus, and Numbers. It is the priestly document, emphasizing priestly concerns, genealogies, and the greatness of God. The style is rather formal and repetitious. Like E, it does not employ the name Yahweh ("the Lord") until after it has been revealed to Moses. No sacrifice is mentioned prior to the time of Moses, and only priests descended from Aaron are permitted to officiate at the altar. Within P is the Code of Holiness (Lev. 17-26), which is usually designated H. The Law reached its full form (JEDP) between 500 B.C. and 400 B.C.

The Mosaic Tradition

Here are some of the statements often made in behalf of the Mosaic authorship of the Pentateuch:

1. In Jewish tradition Moses has been considered the author since pre-Christian times.

2. The kind of references made to Moses throughout the Bible support this position. He is mentioned over and over again in every book of the Pentateuch

— next page