

## THE INTERPRETER'S BIBLE

not once recorded that the patriarchs offered sacrifice. In view of the frequent and indeed casual reference to the practice in other parts of the book (e.g., Gen. 12:7; 22:9; 26:25; 35:7, cited above), it is not likely that this silence is accidental. Its significance becomes apparent when it is found that the books of Exodus, Leviticus, and Numbers contain a mass of detailed regulations concerning the modes and dates of sacrifices (Exod. 29:38-42; Lev. 1:2-5:19; Num. 15:1-41; 29:1-39). These regulations are promulgated *de novo*; that is, the assumption underlying them is that hitherto the institution of sacrifice had been unknown. It may reasonably be inferred that they are related to the material in Genesis in which sacrifice is not mentioned. Again, the concern for the proper performance of the cult which finds expression in the regulations regarding sacrifice is also characteristic of the great mass of legislation in Exodus—except that in chs. 20-23 and 34—Leviticus and Numbers. Furthermore, this legislation is cast in the same pedantic style as the material dealing with sacrifice. It is difficult to avoid the conclusion that it comes from the same source.

It is this material which constitutes the P document. A comparison of its laws with those found elsewhere in the Pentateuch leaves no room for doubt that they form the latest stratum of the legal material. The document is thus the latest of the four of which the Hexateuch is composed.

When the P material has been removed from Genesis, the presence of duplications and inconsistencies, and the alternating use of the Lord (Yahweh) and God (Elohim), in the narrative remaining indicate that it comes in the main from two different sources. Using the names employed in referring to or addressing the Deity as our criterion—though allowance must be made for occasional redactional alteration, e.g., in Gen. 40-50 (see the Exeg. thereon)—and correlating passages which reveal similarities of style and identity of interest in certain localities, we are able to reconstruct, with, of course, numerous lacunae, two narratives, the documents J and E. An examination of the non-P material in Exodus-Joshua reveals the fact that these documents are component parts of the Hexateuch—with which Judg. 1:1-2:5 really belongs—as a whole. The dependence of E upon J, noted below, indicates the priority of the latter.

The evidence for the literary independence of Deuteronomy, D, is of a character similar to that for the once separate existence of J, E, and P: (a) The style of the book has marked peculiarities which set it off both from the natural

simplicity of J and E and from the formal phraseology of P; and (b) the religious tone of the D legislation stands in marked contrast to the simple cult requirements and matter-of-fact secular enactments of the JE codes (Exod. 20:23-23:19; 34:10-27) on the one hand, and to the advanced ceremonialism of P on the other.

The peculiar style and the religious ideas which characterize D are found also in certain passages in the other books of the Hexateuch. These passages are not only unnecessary to the continuity of the reconstructed source documents, but frequently inject an element of inconsistency into their context. They are accordingly assumed to have come from the hand of a redactor, or redactors, belonging to the same circle as the authors of Deuteronomy—RD.

That D is later than JE—the narrative built up by R<sup>JE</sup> through a conflation of the two documents, J and E—is indicated by the fact that the historical recapitulation in the opening chapters of Deuteronomy is dependent upon JE. Furthermore, D incorporates and frequently expands much of the legislative material now forming part of JE.

The priority of D to P is indicated not only by the fact that the laws of the latter are in many cases a development of those of the former, but especially by a comparison of their respective theories as to the priesthood. In D, Levite and priest are practically synonymous terms, and all priests are of equal rank. In P, the Levites are not priests, but ministers of subordinate rank; and at the head of the priesthood stands the high priest, unknown to D. Any suggestion that D is a simplification of P is contradicted by the known fact that the hierarchical system of P remained in force until the destruction of the temple in A.D. 70.

## VI. The Structure of the Documents

The Graf-Wellhausen hypothesis has commanded the assent of the great majority<sup>13</sup> of Old Testament critics for more than sixty years, and has served as the point of departure for investigation of the internal structure of the several sources. This investigation, indeed, began as soon as the hypothesis had been formulated. Wellhausen<sup>14</sup> himself pointed out that the account of the rise of nomadism, of the discovery of music, and of the beginning of metalworking in Gen. 4:16-24, derived from the J document, was an account of the origin of certain skills which the author implies had continued in un-

<sup>13</sup> For the theories held by the dissenting minority see Simpson, *Early Traditions of Israel*, pp. 44-46; also Robert H. Pfeiffer, *Introduction to the Old Testament* (New York: Harper & Bros., 1941), pp. 140-41.

<sup>14</sup> In *Die Composition des Hexateuchs* mentioned above.