

Pfeiffer, Robert H., "A Non-Israelitic Source of the Book of Genesis" 1928
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The evidence for the existence of P as a separate literary work in Genesis must therefore be derived from Gen 1-11, since the other detailed and independent sections of P (17:23) could conceivably have been composed ad hoc, currente calamo, by a priestly redactor of JED. In Gen. 1-11 P is neither commenting nor supplementing another work but composing freely: these chapters are therefore unlike the rest of the book in two respects: in 1 - 11 P contains 50 per cent of the material, whereas in 12 - 50 P is not more than 20 percent of J; and in 1 - 11 J was added to P, whereas in 12 - 50 P was added to JE (this is perfectly evident in the case of the flood story and of the ethnological table in ch. 1-, but throughout 1 - 11, J is made up of fragments abruptly thrust into the well woven fabric of P).

Comparison between J and S

J draws his materials from two classes of oral traditions: Canaanitic and Israelitic. . . S draws likewise from two groups of sources: Mythical lore and tribal traditions. But just as J never uses cosmological myths, so S knows nothing of the cultic legends of Canaan. . . .

The style of J is imaginative, poetical; in S it is adequate, matter-of-fact; the description of Abraham's welcome to three strangers in J (18.1-8) is a colorful painting; the account of Lot's invitation to two angels (19.1-8) is a severe etching; in the first the language is affluent in imagery, in the second it is clear and concise. The emotional overtones of J are lacking in S: the tragedies of J are pathetic, those of S brutal. J is refined, sophisticated; S is primitive, barbarous. . . .

J never speaks of the death of the patriarchs. . . J is truly a "Paradise Regained"; S is literally a "Paradise Lost". . . .

Sacrifices appear in later additions to S (4.3-5; 8.20), and in E, but not at all in J: in J the patriarchs build altars but curiously do not sacrifice thereon; J obviously has modified his sources and anticipates somehow the prophets, for whom sacrifice per se had no religious significance . . .

J and E and even D betray no knowledge of S

In its original form S must have appeared in the time of Solomon; but the later accretions cannot be dated accurately: some, like the flood story, may be earlier than Ezekiel and Second Isaiah; others, like the Melchizedek episode (14.18-20) are clearly post-exilic. . .

In conclusion, I would reconstruct the history of the Book of Genesis as follows: the J and E documents, running closely parallel and beginning with Abraham, were written in Judah and Ephraim respectively between Solomon and Amos and were combined about 650; this JE document was published in a priestly edition about 500 with the addition of P, that was written ad hoc and had never circulated separately before; in the fifth century S, an Edomitic work of the tenth century reedited and supplemented at various times, was added to JEP by the final redactor of the Pentateuch who was anxious to preserve all extant ancient material and thus make of the Pentateuch a corpus of Mosaic literature.