

CONTRADICTIONS AND DIVERGENCES

sented. In truth, it is indisputable that disparities do in fact exist between certain sections in regard to the conception of the Deity (I shall deal later with the manner of the Divine manifestations). Possibly these divergences indicate the different types of tradition that have been absorbed into the various sections; but they do not prove the existence of documents such as J, E and P, and they contain nothing that could not be found in a homogeneous book. The fact that in the sections ascribed to J, where the name YHWH occurs, God appears in a more personal aspect and is endowed with the special attributes just mentioned, whilst in the sections allotted to E and P, which employ the name 'Elōhīm, a more abstract concept is reflected, is quite explicable on the basis of the rules governing the use of the two Divine Names that we have set forth in the previous lectures. The disparity between the sections attributed to E and those ascribed to P can likewise be fully explained when we bear in mind that to E are generally referred the narrative sections with their vivid colourfulness, and to P mostly the more doctrinal passages.

Should you counter: 'But even so, the fact that in the various sections different concepts of God are reflected cannot but raise doubts in our minds', then permit me to illustrate my argument with a story. Let us imagine that a certain author writes a biography of his father, who was a notable savant, an academician. We shall assume that in this book the writer gives us a multi-faceted picture of his father, describing his private life at home, his relations with his students at college, and his scientific work. We shall also suppose that the writer does not devote a special section to each of these aspects, but arranges his material in chronological order, and in consequence so blends the passages appertaining to the three themes that each part of the book contains something relating to each one of them. Let us further presume that the pupils and admirers of this scholar and his academic circle were accustomed to call him just 'the professor'; they knew full well, of course, that there were many professors in the world, but to them he was 'the professor' — with the definite article. Doubtless when the author proceeds to write his work, in the passages describing his father's life within the family circle, he refers to him as 'Father'; he writes, for example: 'Then father said so-and-so to mother'; or 'on that