

for trees to emerge, as was shown by the olive leaf plucked off by the dove. 8.10-11

6. The dove was sent out and returned no more. 8.12
7. Finally, v.13, the day is noted on which Noah discovered that the water was dried up from off the earth. 8.13

This regular gradation is spoiled by the critics, who assign (vs.6-12) the mission of the birds, to J; the consequence of which is that P springs at once from ver. 5, the first appearance of the mountain-tops, to ver. 13, where the waters were dried up from off the earth.

The drying of the ground is likewise stated in two successive stages. First (ver. 13), the surface was so far dried that the water had disappeared. Then (ver.14), the earth was dry. These verses are divided by the critics between J and P. P, 8.13a, 14; J, 8.13b

The description of successive stages is not identical repetition, and as such suggestive of distinct documents. And if it were, four statements of the rise of the waters, three of their destructive effects, and seven of their fall, cannot be distributed between two documents without leaving repetitions in each. More than two documents are necessary, if each repetition is indicative of a separate writer. The critical argument is in this case plainly self-destructive.