

LANGUAGE AND STYLE

Cassuto, U., The Documentary Hypothesis and the Composition of the Pentateuch. (Jerusalem: Magnes Press) 1941, First Eng. ed. 1961

p. 44 . . . we must not rely upon the differences in language in order to determine the origin of the sections, which we shall subsequently use to decide the linguistic characteristics of the sources, for in that case we shall indeed fall into the snare of reasoning in a circle; . . .

p. 46 . . . first these passages are attributed to J because they contain yaladh; thereafter the deduction is made that yaladh is an expression peculiar to J.

p. 54 But let us not be deceived by appearances. Let us not forget that to P are attributed those very sections that by their nature are necessarily dull and arid. How, for example, is it possible to infuse vitality and the distinctive charm of fine writing into genealogical records like those of the 'book of the history of Adam' or the list of Shem's descendants? On the other hand, the limited number of narrative sections that are customarily allotted to P show the vividness and grace of diction that characterize the narratives attributed to J and E. Conversely, in the few instances where genealogical lists are ascribed to J, we find the same frigid, insipid and schematic manner of writing peculiar to the P genealogies. In a word, change of style depends on change of subject-matter, not on difference of sources.

12,6