

INTRODUCTION

Historically, Jewish and Christian scholars have credited Moses with the authorship of the first five books of the Bible—the Pentateuch.¹ In contrast, contemporary higher criticism which evolved from the theories of Jean Astruc and Johann Eichhorn, through the modifications of Herman Hupfeld, to the Graf-Wellhausen hypothesis holds the view that the Pentateuch was not written by Moses but is instead the end product of many centuries of composition by unknown sources and editing by an unknown redactor. This higher critical view is known as the *Documentary Hypothesis*. There is ongoing debate between those who hold the traditional view of Mosaic authorship and contemporary higher criticism.

Recognizing the significance of this debate, Edward Garrett said, “The Pentateuch is the thread of gold which runs – now latent, now prominent – throughout the whole body of the Scriptures. Retain it in its place, and the whole is united by a consistent purpose from end to end; take it away, and all the rest of revelation becomes a mass of inextricable confusion.”²

Conservative evangelical apologist Josh McDowell said, “The documentary hypothesis calls into question the credibility of the entire Old Testament. One would have to conclude, if the assertions are correct, that the Old Testament is a gigantic literary fraud. Either God did speak to and through Moses or we have to acknowledge that we possess a belles-lettres hoax.”³

¹Norman L. Geisler, *Baker Encyclopedia of Christian Apologetics*, (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Books, 1999), 770.

²Edward Garrett, from the article “Pentateuch” in *Kitto’s Cyclopaedia of Biblical Literature*, Third Edition, 1861, as quoted in Oswald T. Allis, *The Five Books of Moses*, (Phillipsburg, NJ: Presbyterian and Reformed Publishing Co., 1980), 2.

³Josh McDowell, *The New Evidence that Demands a Verdict*, (Nashville, TN: Thomas Nelson Publishers, 1999), 394.

In 1987, University of California Professor Richard Elliot Friedman (Ph.D. Harvard University) asserted, “At present . . . there is hardly a biblical scholar in the world actively working on the problem who would claim that the Five Books of Moses were written by Moses – or by any one person.”⁴ In contrast, University of California at Berkeley Professors Isaac M. Kikawada (Ph.D. University of California at Berkeley) and Arthur Quinn (Ph.D. Princeton University) wrote, “However imposing the consensus, the documentary hypothesis remains an hypothesis. Its formulation may well have represented the dawn of a new day for biblical scholarship, but days have their dawns and their dusks.”⁵

This paper will attempt to summarize the history and origin of the Documentary Hypothesis and modern higher critical thought, discuss the philosophical presuppositions of higher critical thought, and present a defense of the Mosaic authorship of the Pentateuch.

HISTORY AND ORIGIN OF THE DOCUMENTARY HYPOTHESIS

It is generally held that the foundations for the Documentary Hypothesis were laid in 1753 when French Physician Jean Astruc (1684-1766) published a study of Genesis in which he suggested the first two chapters of Genesis were compiled from two distinct sources.⁶ Astruc based his theory on the variations in the usage of the divine names Jehovah and Elohim. While not totally rejecting Mosaic authorship, Astruc believed Genesis was the compilation of two sources and Moses was simply the compiler.

⁴Richard Elliot Friedman, *Who Wrote the Bible?*, (New York: Summit Books, 1987), 28.

⁵Isaac M. Kikawada and Arthur Quinn, *Before Abraham Was*, (Nashville, TN: Abingdon Press, 1985), 13.

⁶R. Norman Whybray, *Introduction to the Pentateuch*, (Grand Rapids, MI: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Company), 13.

Picking up on Astruc's theory, German rationalist Johann Gottfried Eichhorn (1752–1827) also divided Genesis into two sources: the Jehovist and the Elohist.⁷ Eichhorn was one of the first scholars to use the term “higher criticism,”⁸ which refers to the scholarly judging of a text to determine if its “alleged authorship and date are correct, whether its statements are trustworthy and credible.”⁹ His claim was that one source favored the use of the divine name Jehovah (translated “LORD” in the English translations) while the other source favored the divine name Elohim (translated “God” in the English translations). Eichhorn also suggested that there are differences in the style of the two sources, differentiating between a priestly style and the legal code of the Pentateuch. Neither Astruc nor Eichhorn applied their theories beyond the early chapters of Exodus.¹⁰

In 1805, Wilhelm Martin Leberecht De Wette (1790-1849) denied the Mosaic authorship of the Pentateuch and suggested that Deuteronomy had been written during the seventh century B.C. In 1823 Eichhorn modified his view and also started to deny Mosaic authorship of the Pentateuch. Thus, from Astruc and Eichhorn's original two-document theory, several new theories also developed including the Fragmentary Hypothesis, the Supplementary Theory, and the Crystallization Theory.¹¹ Following these theories, Herman Hupfeld devised his Modified Documentary Hypothesis, which, along with the Graf-Wellhausen Hypothesis, became the link between Astruc and Eichhorn, and contemporary higher critical thought.

⁷Norman L. Geisler and William E. Nix, *A General Introduction to the Bible*, (Chicago: Moody Press, 1986), 158.

⁸*Ibid.*, 158.

⁹Allis, 3.

¹⁰*Ibid.*, 15.

¹¹McDowell, 404-405. This paper will not address these theories; however a short summary of each is presented as an appendix.

Herman Hupfeld's modifications to the Documentary Hypothesis of Astruc and Eichhorn were proposed in 1853. In addition to the Jehovist source, Hupfeld identified two Elohist sources in Genesis. The first he described as the "Urschrift" (basic document) which he compared to Eichhorn's Elohist from Genesis 1-19. But according to Hupfeld, a second Elohist document began in Genesis 20. He attributed this to a second, younger Elohist. Further, Hupfeld noted continuity between these three sources and determined the role of higher criticism to be finding the link between these sources. Hupfeld suggested that the link was a redactor who compiled these three sources into one work. He believed this redactor sometimes recorded the sources word for word and at other times took editorial privilege and made changes as he deemed appropriate.¹² Hupfeld's arrangement and order of the sources can be summarized as:

First Elohist
 Second Elohist
 Jehovist
 Deuteronomist

Further modification to the Documentary Hypothesis came from Karl Heinrich Graf (1815-1869) and Julius Wellhausen (1844-1918). Graf and Wellhausen accepted Hupfeld's two Elohist sources but, drawing on an evolutionary bias, proposed a change in the order of the sources. They stated that the priestly legislation (first Elohist) found in Genesis through Numbers was written after Deuteronomy. The arrangement and order of the Graf-Wellhausen sources can be summarized as follows:

J Jehovist
 E Second Elohist
 D Deuteronomist
 P Priestly Writer or First Elohist (Hupfeld's "Urschrift")

¹²Allis, 16.

Gleason L. Archer, Jr. (Ph.D. Harvard University) noted, “Although Wellhausen contributed no innovations to speak of, he restated the documentary theory with great skill and persuasiveness, supporting the JEDP sequence upon an evolutionary basis. . . . The age was ripe for the documentary theory, and Wellhausen’s name became attached to it as the classical exponent of it.”¹³

The Graf-Wellhausen theory continues to be generally accepted and taught in nonconservative institutions with only minor concerns about the dates of the documents noted. At these institutions, some critics have added additional sources such as J1, J2, E1, E2, E3, G, K, and L. However, not a single manuscript supporting *any* of these alleged sources have ever been found. Twentieth century supporters of this theory include Julius A. Bewer, *Literature of the Old Testament* (1922), and Robert H. Pfeiffer, *Introduction to the Old Testament* (1941, 1948).¹⁴ This theory is commonly referred to today as the Documentary Hypothesis.¹⁵

CONTEMPORARY HIGHER CRITICAL THOUGHT

In contrast with the traditional view of Mosaic authorship of the Pentateuch, the Documentary Hypothesis is a widely accepted theory of contemporary higher criticism which promotes the view that four independent sources were compiled by a redactor to form the Pentateuch.¹⁶ According to the Documentary Hypothesis the sources are the Yahwist or Jehovist (J) dating from the ninth century B.C., the Elohist (E) from the eighth century B.C., the

¹³Gleason L. Archer, Jr., *A Survey of Old Testament Introduction*, 87 as quoted in Geisler and Nix, 160.

¹⁴Geisler and Nix, 160-161.

¹⁵Oswald T. Allis differentiates between the “documentary hypothesis” of Astruc and Eichhorn and the Graf-Wellhausen Hypothesis, which he terms the “development hypothesis”. Other works included in the bibliography to this paper speak of the Graf-Wellhausen Hypothesis and the “documentary hypothesis” as synonyms. The author has chosen to follow this convention in this paper.

Deuteronomist (D) from the seventh century B.C., and the priestly writing (P) from the fifth century B.C.¹⁷ This theory suggests that around 400 B.C. an unknown redactor (or redactors) compiled material from these sources into the present day Pentateuch. This theory is based on the different uses of the divine names Jehovah and Elohim,¹⁸ the differences in writing style, repetitive and presumed contradictory accounts of the same events, and a perceived lack of harmony between the traditional view of Mosaic authorship and the text of the Pentateuch.

Proponents of the Documentary Hypothesis infer from the various uses of the divine names, Jehovah and Elohim, that there are multiple authors of the Pentateuch. The name “Elohim,” translated “God” in the English translations, is used 33 times in Gen. 1:1 through Gen. 2:3. Then, without explanation, the name “Jehovah Elohim,” translated “LORD God,” is used 20 times between Gen. 2:4 and Gen. 3:23. Then, the name “Jehovah,” translated “LORD,” is used ten times between Gen. 4:1 and Gen. 4:16. The assumption of the critics is that the use of “Jehovah” is typical of a J document or Jehovist source, the use of “Elohim” is typical of an E document or Elohistic source, and the use of “Jehovah Elohim” is typical of a combination of the two documents. The theory further suggests that the name “Jehovah” was not revealed until Ex. 6:3 and therefore, the author of Ex. 6:3 must be different from the author who used the name “Jehovah” in Genesis. Otherwise, if it was the same author, he contradicted himself.

However, the Pentateuch is not alone among religious documents in this regard. For example, a similar style is used in the Qur’an, which has only one author—Muhammad.

¹⁶It should be noted that the traditional view does allow for Joshua authoring Deuteronomy chapter 34—the account of Moses’ death.

¹⁷Geisler, 770.

¹⁸Jehovah is the English pronunciation of the Hebrew Yahweh. The name Jehovah will be used throughout this text in lieu of Yahweh.

Muhammad used the names *Allah* and *Rab* for God in different chapters.¹⁹ Perhaps a better explanation for the variant use of the divine names in the Pentateuch would be that Moses changed the name based on the subject matter and the aspect of God being discussed. Dr. Norman L. Geisler explains it this way: “The majestic *Elohim* is an appropriate word when speaking of creation, as in Genesis 1. *Yahweh* the Covenant-maker is more appropriate when God engages people, as in Genesis 2-3.”²⁰ Josh McDowell points out that “according to the documentarians, the divine name *Yahweh* indicates J source, *Elohim* indicates E source, and P source used *Elohim* up to Ex. 6:3 but thereafter used *Jehovah* also”²¹ and McDowell demonstrates that the name *Elohim* actually occurs in three of the *J* passages (Gen. 31:50, Gen. 33:5, and Gen. 33:11); *Yahweh* occurs in two *P* passages prior to Ex. 6:3 (Gen. 17:1 and Gen. 21:1); and *Yahweh* occurs in nine *E* passages (Gen. 21:33, Gen. 22:4, Gen. 22:11, Gen. 28:21, Gen. 18:1, Gen. 18:8-11) which seems to present problems for the critics theory.

Differences in writing style within the Pentateuch are also cited as support for the multiple source theory of the Documentary Hypothesis. Critics contend that the writing style of the P source is unique and easily discernable from the J and E sources, which are more difficult to differentiate. They cite passages such as Gen. 1:1 – 2:4a and Genesis 5 where the writing style is “solemn and majestic,” “repetitive,” “uses stereotype idioms,” “balanced structures,” and “appeals to the intellect.”²² These passages are contrasted with Gen. 2:4b – 4:26 where the style is described as “artistic,” “picturesque,” and “appeals to the imagination;”²³ the theory being that

¹⁹Geisler, 587.

²⁰Ibid., 587-588.

²¹McDowell, 490.

²²Norman Habel, *Literary Criticism of the Pentateuch*, (Philadelphia, PA: Fortress Press, 1971), 27.

²³Ibid., 27.

these differing styles are the result of different sources. However, this does not prove to be necessarily true. Moses was “a well-educated Egyptian [who] had been exposed to suzerainty treaties and every other narrative and artistic writing form then available.”²⁴ Geisler notes that C.S. Lewis has authored “children’s stories, in-depth literary critiques, scholarly analysis, allegorical satire, science fiction, biographic narratives, and logic-driven disputations and treatises;”²⁵ one author, many styles. The assumption that Moses could not have written in more than one style is simply not valid and not supported historically.

Another assumption of the Documentary Hypothesis is that repeated accounts of the same story indicate multiple sources since no single author would have reason to repeat it. Further, the contradictory details within such repeated stories are attributed to the redactor, again indicating multiple sources for the Pentateuch. Critics use the Creation accounts in Genesis 1 and Genesis 2 as examples of repeated and contradictory accounts. Critic H. H. Rowley said, “For instance, between the two accounts of the Creation there is a disagreement as to the sequence of creation, a difference in the usage of the divine names, a difference in the conception of God, and a difference of style.”²⁶ However, from a different perspective, there appear to be no contradictions between these two accounts. Genesis 1 simply provides an outline of the events and Genesis 2 gives the details. Genesis 1 is in chronological order while Genesis 2 is in topical order.²⁷ Supporting this view, archaeologist Kenneth Kitchen states that archaeological studies have found this literary pattern to be common in the ancient Near East. Commenting on an archaeological find in Egypt, Kitchen says, “Just as an assignment of the various portions of

²⁴Geisler, 588.

²⁵Ibid.

²⁶H. H. Rowley, *The Growth of the Old Testament*, 24 as quoted in McDowell, 495.

these Egyptian texts to different documents is unheard of in scholarly circles, so is it absurd to practice a dissection of sources in their contemporary literature found in Genesis one and two.”²⁸

Critics charge that the account in Deuteronomy 34 recording Moses’ death is obvious proof that Moses did not write the Pentateuch. However, one must remember that it was common practice in that day for a successor prophet to append a final chapter onto his predecessor’s writings. “Such scholars as R. D. Wilson, Merrill Unger, Douglas Young, R. Laird Harris, Gleason L. Archer, Jr., and R. K. Harrison easily accept that the final chapter of Deuteronomy was likely appended by Joshua or someone else in Moses’ inner circle.”²⁹ Additionally, the Jewish Talmud attributes Deuteronomy 34 to Joshua.³⁰ Thus, this in no way proves that Moses did not pen the rest of the Pentateuch.

There are additional propositions that are used to support the Documentary Hypothesis, such as the use of distinctive terminology and a perceived difference in theology within the Pentateuch. These propositions will not be addressed in this paper.

PHILOSOPHICAL PRESUPPOSITIONS OF HIGHER CRITICAL THOUGHT

Julius Wellhausen wrote, “At last, in the course of a casual visit in Gottingen in the summer of 1867, I learned through Ritschl that Karl Heinrich Graf placed the Law later than the prophets, and, *almost without knowing his reasons for the hypothesis, I was prepared to accept it*”³¹ (emphasis added). This statement clearly shows the role presuppositions had on the

²⁷Norman Geisler and Thomas Howe, *When Critics Ask*, (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Books, 1992), 35.

²⁸Kenneth Kitchen, *The Ancient Orient and the Old Testament*, 117 as quoted in McDowell, 496.

²⁹Geisler, 587.

³⁰McDowell, 517.

development of the Documentary Hypothesis. The dominant philosophical presuppositions that drive higher critical thought include: 1) anti-supernaturalism, 2) Israel's religion and history followed an evolutionary track, 3) there was no writing in the time of Moses, and 4) the patriarchal narratives are legendary and not historical. Some of these presuppositions are similar to the presuppositions that led to Darwin's theory of evolution in the 1800's and the Jesus Seminar's reconstruction of the hypothetical gospel of Q in the 1900's. There is a common thread among these three theories – the “missing link.” Evidence for transitional forms to support evolutionary theory is scarce or non-existent; the Jesus Seminar is unable to produce a single manuscript of the hypothetical Q document; and the proponents of the Documentary Hypothesis are unable to provide a single manuscript of *any* of their alleged sources including the J, E, D, and P (and other) sources. The bottom line is that there is absolutely *no* manuscript evidence to support the Documentary Hypothesis.

The first presupposition of higher critics is anti-supernaturalism. Josh McDowell defines anti-supernaturalism as “disbelief either in God's existence or in His intervention in the natural order of the universe.”³² McDowell states, “In the Pentateuch it is explicitly stated no less than 235 times that either God ‘spoke’ to Moses, or God ‘commanded’ Moses to do something. Prior to his investigation, a critic with an anti-supernaturalism bias (presupposition) would immediately reject these accounts as unhistorical.”³³ One can see how an *a priori* acceptance of anti-supernaturalism can lead to theories such as the Documentary Hypothesis. It is impossible to accept the Mosaic authorship and historical reliability of the Pentateuch while holding this bias. However, antisupernaturalism is defeated by other views common to most antisupernaturalists

³¹Julius Wellhausen, *Prolegomena to the History of Ancient Israel*, (New York: Meridian Books, 1957), 3.

³²McDowell, 352.

namely by the acceptance of the big-bang theory. The big-bang theory requires something outside the natural order of the universe (which by definition is supernatural) to have acted upon the universe (i.e., bangs don't just happen – see the principle of causality).³⁴

The second presupposition states that the Jewish religion has not always been monotheistic but instead, critics claim that Israel's religious history took an evolutionary path from a belief in spirits (primitive man), to manism (ancestor worship), to fetishism (belief in objects indwelt by spirits), to totemism (belief in a tribal god), to magic, to polytheism (belief in many gods), to henotheism (elevating one deity above others), and, finally, to monotheism.³⁵ The critics rightfully hold that the Pentateuch records Hebrew history as monotheistic. However, they claim monotheism did not evolve until the time of Amos, around 760 B.C. Therefore, in their view the Pentateuch could not have been written by Moses, who lived around 1400 B.C. Yet, archaeological discoveries have uncovered evidence of monotheism in the Mosaic age, disproving this evolutionary presupposition.³⁶ Further, Winfried Corduan has aptly demonstrated that all religions are derived *from* original monotheism and do not evolve *to* monotheism as is commonly believed.³⁷

The third presupposition is that writing did not exist in the time of Moses. It is simple to see why this presupposition would lead to theories of non-Mosaic authorship of the Pentateuch—if writing did not exist, then Moses could not have written. However, British Assyriologist A. H. Sayce disproves this presupposition:

³³Ibid.

³⁴For a detailed explanation of the cosmological argument, see Geisler, 160-165.

³⁵Joseph P. Free, "Archaeology and Liberalism", *Bibliotheca Sacra* 113, July 1956 quoted in McDowell, 415.

³⁶McDowell, 420.

First Egyptology, then Assyriology, showed that the art of writing in the ancient East, so far from being of modern growth, was of vast antiquity, and that the two great powers which divided the civilized world between them were each emphatically a nation of scribes and readers. Centuries before Abraham was born, Egypt and Babylonia were alike full of schools and libraries, of teachers and pupils, of poets and prose-writers, and of the literary works which they had composed.³⁸ In 1974, the Ebla tablets were found in what is modern day Syria.³⁹ More than 16,000 clay tablets were found that have been dated between 2580 B.C. and 2250 B.C. These tablets prove writing pre-dated not only Moses, but Abraham as well. The tablets support the biblical accounts of creation out of nothing by one God, giving evidence of monotheism prior to Moses. Additionally, the tablets record biblical names such as Adam, Eve, and Noah. Further archaeological evidence that supports the views of Sayce and others was discovered in 1929 at Ras Shamra.⁴⁰ Sayce summarized by saying “Moses not only could have written the Pentateuch, but it would have been little short of a miracle had he not been a scribe.”⁴¹

The final presupposition to be addressed is the legendary view of the patriarchal narratives. An example of how critics view the patriarchal narratives comes from Robert H. Pfeiffer, who said, “Our sharp distinction between story and history, fancy and fact, seems meaningless when applied to the body of Old Testament narratives which present all the gradations between pure fiction . . . and genuine history.”⁴² However, archaeological evidence such as the Mari tablets, the Egyptian Execration Texts, the Nuzi tablets, and the Ebla tablets has led renowned archaeologist William F. Albright to conclude, “as a whole the picture in Genesis is historical, and there is no reason to doubt the general accuracy of the biographical details and the sketches of personality which make the Patriarchs come alive with a vividness unknown to a single extrabiblical character in the whole vast literature of the ancient Near East.”⁴³ Cyrus

³⁷See Winfried Corduan, *Neighboring Faiths* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 1998).

³⁷A. H. Sayce, *Monument Facts and Higher Critical Fancies*, as quoted in McDowell, 431.

³⁸Geisler, 208.

³⁹McDowell, 432.

⁴⁰A. H. Sayce, *Monument Facts and Higher Critical Fancies*, as quoted in McDowell, 434.

⁴¹Robert H. Pfeiffer, *Introduction to the Old Testament*, p. 27, as quoted in McDowell, 435.

Gordon agrees. He said, “The cuneiform contracts from Nuzu have demonstrated that the social institutions of the patriarchs are genuine and pre-Mosaic. . . . They cannot have been invented by any post-Mosaic J, E, D or P.”⁴⁴

A DEFENSE OF MOSAIC AUTHORSHIP OF THE PENTATEUCH

Despite the fact that the archaeological evidence alone invalidates the documentary presuppositions, there is other solid evidence to support Mosaic authorship of the Pentateuch. For example, the Bible credits the Pentateuch to Moses; Moses was trained and educated; and both Jewish and Christian traditions assign the Pentateuch to Moses.

The Pentateuch claims to have been written by Moses.⁴⁵ Ex. 24:4 says, “Moses then wrote down everything the LORD had said.”⁴⁶ In Leviticus, the phrase “The LORD said to Moses” occurs more than thirty times. Deut. 31:9 says, “So Moses wrote down this law” and Deut. 31:24 says, “After Moses finished writing in a book the words of this law from beginning to end. . . .”

Other books in the Old Testament also credit Moses with authorship of the Pentateuch.⁴⁷ In Josh. 1:7b God says, “Be careful to obey all the law my servant Moses gave you.” Josh. 23:6a says, “. . . be careful to obey all that is written in the Book of the Law of Moses.” Ezra 6:18 says, “And they installed the priests in their divisions and the Levites in their groups for the service of God at Jerusalem, according to what is written in the Book of Moses.” The prophet Malachi

⁴²William F. Albright, *The Biblical Period from Abraham to Ezra*, p. 5, as quoted in McDowell, 443.

⁴³Cyrus H. Gordon, “The Patriarchal Age,” *Journal of Bible and Religion* 21, no. 4 October 1955, as quoted in McDowell, 438.

⁴⁴Geisler, 586. Allis, 7-8.

⁴⁵All Bible references are from the New International Version.

⁴⁶Geisler, 586. Allis, 7-8.

records, “Remember the law of my servant Moses, the decrees and laws I gave him at Horeb for all Israel” (Mal. 4:4). The “Law of Moses” is also mentioned in the books of I and II Kings, I and II Chronicles, Nehemiah, and Daniel.

The New Testament is also unequivocal regarding Mosaic authorship of the Pentateuch. Most notably, Jesus attributes the Pentateuch to Moses. In Mark 7:10 Jesus assigned the Ten Commandments to Moses saying, “For Moses said, ‘Honor your father and your mother. . . .’” In Luke, Jesus assigned the incident at the burning bush to Moses. He said, “But in the account of the bush, even Moses showed that the dead rise, for he calls the Lord ‘the God of Abraham, and the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob’” (Luke 20:37). The Apostle Paul also assigned the Pentateuch to Moses. Paul says in Acts 28:23b, “From morning till evening he explained and declared to them the kingdom of God and tried to convince them about Jesus from the Law of Moses and from the Prophets.” Quoting from Deut. 32:21b, Paul says, “First Moses says, ‘I will make you envious by those who are not a nation; I will make you angry by a nation that has no understanding’” (Rom. 10:19); and, quoting from Deut. 25:4a, Paul says, “For it is written in the Law of Moses: ‘Do not muzzle an ox while it is treading out the grain’” (1Cor. 9:9).

In Acts 7:22, Stephen points out that “Moses was educated in all the wisdom of the Egyptians and was powerful in speech and action.” Josh McDowell notes, “All now agree that this learning would have included the ability to write.”⁴⁸ McDowell goes on to list some qualifications that prepared Moses for authoring the Pentateuch, including education, tradition, geographical familiarity, and time.⁴⁹ It has already been noted that Moses was educated and writing was extant in his day. Moses would have been in a position to obtain the traditions of the

⁴⁷McDowell, 457.

⁴⁸Ibid.

Jewish people that were handed down about their history and relationship with God. Moses knew the geography and climate of the areas he wrote about and he had forty years to write while wandering in the desert. Undeniably, Moses had the skills, the knowledge, and the time to author the Pentateuch.

Both Jewish and Christian traditions associate the Pentateuch with Moses. For example, Jewish works that link Moses to the authorship of the Pentateuch include: the apocryphal book Ecclesiasticus (180 B.C.), the Talmud (200 B.C.), Jewish philosopher Philo (A.D. 20), and Jewish historian Flavius Josephus (first century A.D.).⁵⁰ Likewise, many of the Christian church fathers supported Mosaic authorship of the Pentateuch including: Junilius (A.D. 527-565), Leontius of Byzantium (sixth century A.D.), Melito, Bishop of Sardi (A.D. 175), Cyril of Jerusalem (A.D. 348-386), Hilary (A.D. 366), Rufinus (A.D. 410), and Augustine (A.D. 430).⁵¹ Even the higher critics do not deny that tradition supports the Mosaic authorship of the Pentateuch; they simply believe the traditions to be in error and consider their own views “modern enlightenment.”⁵²

In summation, it seems there is ample evidence to support Mosaic authorship of the Pentateuch while the evidence for the Documentary Hypothesis is weak and the major presuppositions which lead to this view have proven to be invalid.

⁴⁹Ibid., 458-459.

⁵⁰Ibid., 459.

⁵¹Allis, 9.

APPENDIX A: ADDITIONAL THEORIES

Fragmentary Hypothesis

Roman Catholic Priest A. Geddes proposed his Fragmentary Hypothesis in 1800. He theorized that a redactor compiled many various-sized fragments some 500 years after the death of Moses. By 1805, German Johann Vater had further developed Gedde's theory and held that there were at least 38 different fragment sources that developed into the Pentateuch. Vater believed the Pentateuch was compiled around 586 B.C.⁵³

Supplementary Theory

In 1830, Heinrich Ewald developed a theory that the basis of Genesis through Joshua was in an Elohist writing. He claimed that a later Jehovistic writing was edited into the Elohist writing as a supplement.⁵⁴

Crystallization Theory

Ewald later rejected his own supplementary theory and replaced it in 1845 with a theory that five narrators wrote various parts of the Pentateuch over a period of seven hundred years. He theorized that the fifth narrator was also the editor who compiled the Pentateuch between 790 and 740 B.C. This theory also held that Deuteronomy was a later work added around 500 B.C.⁵⁵

⁵³McDowell, 404.

⁵⁴Ibid., 405.

⁵⁵Ibid.

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