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## A CRITIQUE OF HIGHER CRITICISM

The idea of applying standard statistical methods to the theories of the critics is an interesting one. All too often people have been led into great sweeping conclusions without any attempt to carry them out fully and see whether they apply in every case. If only such a method as you describe could have been applied to the criticism in its early stages, it might have been a very beneficial effect.

Unfortunately, however, I fear that the higher criticism of the Old Testament, and particularly of the Pentateuch, has gone past the point where this type of study would be of much help. The divisions have been moved back and forth until they have come to correspond to an actual distinction of a different type, and I am not at all sure that the study of style would prove a great deal now.

Originally the critics divided the Pentateuch into two main documents, one of which used the divine name *Jehovah* and the other *Elohim*. It would have been quite easy to examine these two long documents thoroughly in order to see whether there was actually a stylistic difference between them. However the two document view has been out of date now for over one hundred years and the present position of the critics is very different. As at present held by the critics, the major documents of the Pentateuch correspond quite generally to divisions of types of subject matter. Thus the so-called D document consists of exhortation. It includes the greater part of Deuteronomy, with Moses' exhortation to the people in the wilderness, and includes similar passages in other parts of the Pentateuch. Naturally the manner of expression in exhortation is quite different from that of other types of literature, even if the same man writes both, and this could apply even to some extent to the selection of different words.

The critics start in the beginning of Genesis with two main documents: the J document and the P document. Genesis 1 is