

V. EXAMINATION OF THE ARGUMENTS FOR PARTITION

As we have noticed, we have two types of arguments. I present to you five different manuscripts. Here is a one roll. Here is another roll. And here is another. Here are five different rolls, and they exist as separate things. And I say, "Look at these, and tell me in what order these were written." As you look at them, you find a steady progress from one up to the other – a progress which could be traced along several different lines, but which always went in the same direction from the more primitive to the more complex. You would say, "I am quite sure that these documents belong in this order." You would not have to discuss partition, as you already have distinct documents.

In the case of the Pentateuch the situation is entirely different. No one has ever discovered anywhere an ancient copy of any one of the documents which the critics claim to have existed. Nor is there anywhere any mention of any such documents or any trace of one or any ancient mention of one. Nothing of the kind exists. The claim that such documents ever existed rests upon taking the Pentateuch as we have it today and dividing it up into sections and putting two verses here and three here and a chapter there and two chapters over here, thus dividing it up. And then, when you divide it up into documents, you say, "Look at the order and see how the progress goes from the simple to the complex and from the primitive to the advanced." However, you need to prove that you have a right to divide it up, or your other argument is of no avail. If you first prove that you have a right to divide it up this way, and then find that there is such a development, it would be very strong evidence that your decision was correct. Thus, two types of arguments go together, though they can be separated. As a matter of fact, it was the arguments for partition that were discussed back and forth and studied for a period of over one hundred years before the beginning of the Wellhausen Theory, before the development idea was brought into line with it at all. This has to be proved before one can be ready to discuss theories of development.