

of J. They say that “male and female” is a typical P expression, as against “the man and his wife” which they call a typical J expression, and so on. They say that this sort of thing is proof that two neighboring verses must be assigned to different documents. Yet when we look at their divisions and their criteria for these divisions we find that they are not consistent. If they could simply take every instance of their various criteria and put them where they wanted them and then say that this was proof of the theory, then they would obviously be reasoning in a circle. But they can not properly do that because they claim to have each document complete. They claim to have complete parallel stories which read intelligently. In order properly to say that, they should not take a few words from here and a few from there; they should take full sentences or sizeable portions.

The critics assign Gen 1:1-2:4 to P and 2:4 to the end of chapter 4 to J. It sounds good thus to assign a fairly large section to each document, but before we have gone very far we find them assigning rather small sections from one place and another from another place in such a way as to make the entire theory begin to look rather weak. Even after they have done this to the text, we find words that they say are distinctive of one document occurring in sections they assign to another. In such cases they say that they were changed by a redactor. The many such claims that words have been changed by a redactor greatly weaken the entire case of the critics, soon getting into such complicated comparisons of words that it is very easy for anyone to get lost. It is much easier for most students to sit in class and accept the words of the liberal professor as he declares that the distinctive marks of style show clearly that there are distinct documents (or for you to sit here and have me tell you their arguments are wrong) than it is for either group to carefully examine the evidence for themselves. There are very few people who actually know much of the details surrounding the issue. There are a few books which take up some of these points of style, trying to look at them extensively, but if I read aloud half a page of one of those books and try to make it clear, it would take me twenty minutes to do so. So you do not get very far with this sort of argument, unless you take a great deal of time. But I think it is important to say, that if the evidence was clear for distinct documents, it would not take so long to prove it. The fact that there are so many