

out the spies in Num. 13-14, and the rebellion of Korah, Dathan, and Abiram in Num. 16. Each of these stories contains many details and subplots, either expressed or implied. Anyone can easily separate these out according to some pre-established criterion, and claim evidence for the JEDP documentary hypothesis. But that procedure is arbitrary, as the details can fit just as well (or better) into the single account. Proponents of the hypothesis try to strengthen their case by pointing out apparent contradictions within each story. By so doing, they make many assumptions; here are a few of those assumptions:

- Gen. 37:28 -- Midianites and Ishmaelites could not describe the same group of men.
- Num. 13:3,26 -- Paran and Kadesh must be separate, non-overlapping geographical territories.
- Num. 13:21-24 -- the entire contingent of spies must have searched all these places, and could not have divided into smaller groups.
- Num. 13:27,32 -- the phrase, "eats up the inhabitants," must refer to poor agricultural conditions and not to continuous warfare. (See Lev. 26:38.)
- Num. 16:1 -- Korah, a religious leader, and Dathan and Abiram, political leaders, could not have combined forces to revolt against Moses.

None of these assumptions is capable of proof. All the stories' details can fit together into a comprehensive picture. Some accounts, as the flood account, are complicated; but then, the history of men and nations is seldom a simple thing.

3. III. Wife or Sister?

J

Gen. 12:10-20

Abram and Sarai fool
Pharaoh in Egypt.

E

Gen. 20:1-17

Abraham and Sarah fool
Abimelech in Gerar.