

Anderson, G. W., The History and Religion of Israel (Oxford) 1966

p. 5 prededes but as the preface to what follows. This leaves the first four books, The Tetrateuch, as they are now sometimes called, as the initial group. In them three main sources are interwoven. The final work of editing them was done after the Exile; but they embody much ancient traditional material. The second block consists of Joshua, Judges, 1 and 2 Samuel, and 1 and 2 Kings, with Deuteronomy as the preamble to the whole. Here a rich variety of material has been woven together: traditional tales, official or semi-official annals and lists, eyewitness accounts of important national events, stories derived from prophetic groups, and the like. While there is no rigid uniformity of approach, the general principle of interpretation and the standards by which persons and policies are judged are those of the book of Deuteronomy. This compilation, spanning the period from the entry into the Promised Land till the Exile, is now commonly known as The Deuteronomistic history. The third block is The Chronicler's history. It consists of 1 and 2 Chronicles, Ezra, and Nehemiah. Formally it covers the entire period described by the other two compilations and goes beyond them. But from Adam to Saul there are only genealogies and lists, with no accompanying narrative.

p. 6 Again, archaeological data are collected, observed, recorded, and interpreted by archaeologists, who, like biblical critics, are neither infallible nor unanimous in all their views.

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#### THE PATRIARCHS

These stories have traditionally been regarded as historically accurate records of events. At the other extreme they have been treated as giving little or no reliable information about the period to which they refer, but as reflecting the religious belief and practice, and the folk traditions, of the period of the monarchy. But on any showing they are of historical importance since at the very least they embody Israel's own understanding of her remoter past.