

REVISITING A DEFENSE OF THE BIBLE'S CREDIBILITY

Part I - Answering Liberal Theology's "Higher Criticism"

A. Answering Liberal Theology's Documentary Hypothesis

(2 Peter 1:16-21 et al.)

I. Introduction

- A. Liberal Theology scholars believe the Bible is not God inspired, that it needs critics with "higher" authority than the Bible itself possesses to explain its *alleged* evolution from man-made myths to its present form.
- B. To handle this claim, we revisit our answers to Liberal Theology's "Higher Criticism" by examining Liberal Theology's (Literary-Analytical) Documentary Hypothesis, using scholarly analysis and Scripture:

II. Answering Liberal Theology's Documentary Hypothesis, 2 Peter 1:16-21 et al.

- A. Liberal Theology scholars **deny** that Moses *alone* wrote the Pentateuch (Genesis, Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers and Deuteronomy) under *divine inspiration* according to the Five Pillars of Liberal Theology's Documentary Hypothesis (U. Cassuto, The Doc. Hyp., 1972, p. 14; Bruce K. Waltke, 1973 Class Notes, Dallas Seminary).
- B. Many examples in Scripture for the pillars are given by backers of the Documentary Hypothesis, but we view one example for each pillar to illustrate the core argument that Liberal Theology scholars have for each pillar:
 1. Pillar One: The differing names of '*Elohim* and *Yahweh* for God show two authors, Ibid., Cassuto, p. 14ff.
 2. Pillar Two: Language/style variants [100 + 20 vs. 20 + 100 for 120] show diverse authors, Ibid., p. 14, 52.
 3. Pillar Three: Contrasting viewpoints in the Pentateuch indicate different authors. For example, texts using '*Elohim* show a more distant God than those that use *Yahweh* (Ibid., p. 14, 55-56).
 4. Pillar Four: Repetitions expose errant duplications of one account. For example, Genesis 1 is *followed* by God's *resting* from *creating* in Genesis 2:1-3 which *in turn* is *followed* by Genesis 2:4-25 where God *again creates*, showing *different creation myths* by *different authors* (Ibid., p. 14, 69f).
 5. Pillar Five: *Composite details* of one section of a work expose errant duplications by multiple authors. For example, Jacob's posing as Esau by use of his *clothes and also* by use of *hairy skins* exposes *different accounts* of *one event* by *two authors* with *differing views* of the *event* (Ibid., p. 14, 86-97).
- C. However, the Documentary Hypothesis fails under examination:
 1. The Five Pillars of the Documentary Hypothesis are *each* shown to be in *error* by *scholarly analysis*:
 - a. On the claim that multiple names for God indicate multiple authors, the December 1978, National Geographic, p. 737-738, reports that ancient Semites like the Hebrews used *several names for one deity*.
 - b. On the claim that language/style variants exposed several authors, the Hebrews used the *falling* order (100 + 20) if a number was *alone* but the *rising* order (20 + 100) if the number was part of a *list* of *numbered* items (Ibid., Umberto Cassuto, p. 42-54).
 - c. On the claim that contrasting viewpoints indicate multiple authors, God's names reveal His different *roles*: '*Elohim* presents God as Creator and *Yahweh* as God in covenant relationship with Israel (Ibid., p. 56-68).
 - d. On the claim that duplications indicate multiple authors, Genesis 2 *intentionally omits* large parts of the creation account (like the heavens) because the author in Genesis 2 meant to comment *only* on the *moral* issues of *Genesis 1*, what is *typical* of the practice of other Ancient Near Eastern authors (Ibid., p. 69-83).
 - e. On the claim that the presence of composite details show multiple authors, dividing the context of Jacob's trick to appear to be Esau into two accounts as do advocates of the Documentary Hypothesis actually *counters* the *point* of Jacob's *effort*, namely, that to *deceive*, he used *every* trick *available* (Ibid., p. 84-97).
 - f. Cassuto concluded: "Since . . . the whole structure of the documentary hypothesis" rests "on the five pillars enumerated," and since "all these pillars" are "without substance, it follows that this imposing . . . edifice has, in reality, nothing to support it and it is founded on air." (Ibid., p. 100).
 2. The Documentary Hypothesis is shown to be in *error* by *Scripture's testimony*:
 - a. Matthew 5:18 with 2 Timothy 3:15-16 testify that every letter ("jot" = the smallest Hebrew letter *yodh*) and even every part of every letter that distinguishes it from another letter ("tittle") in Scripture's autograph manuscripts bears God's authorship and authority, so all Scripture bears God's authority!
 - b. In Mark 12:26, Jesus relied on "the book of Moses," the Pentateuch (B. K. C., N. T., p. 163), affirming Moses' authorship of the Pentateuch, and He used it to correct the Sadducees' denial of life after death.
 - c. Thus, Moses wrote the Pentateuch, it is divinely inspired, and the Documentary Hypothesis is in error!

Lesson and Application: Liberal Theology's Documentary Hypothesis is in error, and we can trust every part of the Pentateuch as God's divinely inspired Word that was written by Moses and that bears God's full divine authority!