

CHAPTER ONE STATEMENT AND DIVISION OF THE SUBJECT

The subject defined by this title is one of very complicated and comprehensive character. Especially since Pentateuch-Criticism has become pre-eminently historical in its most advanced leaders, — the school of Reuss, Kuenen, Wellhausen, and others, — the field of investigation has been so enlarged, and the various arguments have assumed such complex relations to each other, that more space would be required for a full discussion than we can allow ourselves. Pentateuch-Criticism has, to a very large extent, been reduced to a question of facts. A detailed examination of facts must furnish the basis upon which all debate must at present be conducted between the conservative and destructive critics. On account of this comprehensiveness, it will be necessary to define our subject, that every thing which does not properly belong to it, or is not vitally connected with it, may be excluded at the outset.

1. We do not intend to discuss the authenticity of the Pentateuch, but only the Mosaic origin of the Codes which it contains. The latter is independent of the former, though the reverse may not be true. Both questions are connected in so far that the establishment of the Mosaic origin of the Codes would furnish one of the strongest arguments for the authenticity of the whole, since the narrative is in most cases subsidiary to the legislation, and serves as its framework.

2. By the predication of Mosaic origin is not meant that every statute and regulation in particular can be proven to have emanated from the mouth of Moses. From the nature of the case, such proof can never be given. Neither will it be possible to show that the *ipsissima verba* of the law in its present form descend from Moses. All that we intend to make a point of inquiry is, *whether the bulk and essence of the Pentateuchal Codes, in so far as they exhibit the evidences of being one great system of legislation, bear the impress of the Mosaic age.* The origin of each individual part must be estimated by its relation to this systematic whole.

3. The questions whether Moses promulgated the laws that pass under his name, and whether he codified them in written form, should be kept distinct. Abstractly they admit of being separated. How far such separation is supposable in this concrete case will appear hereafter.

4. The problem may be stated in a somewhat different form; viz., whether the law be the immediate product of divine revelation, complete from the first, and not admitting of development, or the final outcome of a long process of growth, oftentimes changed before it petrified into its present form. Is the law soil and seed, or is it the fruit of the religious development of Israel? All these contrasts are nearly synonymous with the great alternative, — Mosaic, or non-Mosaic? The former naturally represents revelation, the latter development. Hence it appears that the unity of the Codes must occupy an important place in the discussion.

5. Our subject is one of wide and important bearings, not only in the department of Criticism, but also of Apologetics. It touches the heart of the Christian conception of revelation. Criticism on the part of our opponents has long since left its independent position, and become subservient to naturalistic tendencies. It manifests a spirit of enmity against the very material upon which it works. The innocent literary aspect of the question has been lost: it is no longer a matter of dilettantism,

but of pressing and practical importance, which cannot be confined to the lecture-rooms and studies of the learned, but claims the interest of the Church at large.

We shall endeavor to arrange the numerous questions involved under certain general heads, and choose the following scheme: —

I. Unity of the Pentateuchal Codes.

A. Unity of the laws in Exodus-Numbers

1. The linguistic and literary argument.
2. Incompleteness of the Codes.
3. System, or disorder?
4. Contradictions.
5. Repetitions.
6. Development of law.

B. Unity of Deuteronomy and the laws of the intermediate books.

1. Does a unity of relation exist between Deuteronomy and the Codes of the middle books?
2. If so, to which of the two must we assign the priority?

II. Internal evidence of the Mosaic origin of the Pentateuchal Codes.

A. Internal evidence of the Mosaic origin of the Deuteronomic Code.

1. Direct testimony of the Code to its own origin.
2. Indirect internal testimony.
3. The fraud-theory.

B. Internal evidence of the Mosaic origin of the laws in Exodus-Numbers

1. Direct testimony of the laws to their own origin
 - a. Simply Mosaic origin claimed.
 - b. Codification of laws in written form.
2. Indirect internal evidence.

III. External evidence of the Mosaic origin of the Pentateuchal Codes.

- A. The testimony of the historical books, Judges, 1 and 2 Samuel 1 and 2 Kings.
- B. Testimony of the early prophets, Hosea, Amos, Isaiah, Micah.
- C. Testimony of the poetical books.
- D. 2 Kings 22 and Nehemiah 8-10.