

- 1. Discuss the Documentary hypothesis. What are the various components of the theory? List some the texts of the Bible that are used to support this theory? What are some of the strengths and weaknesses of the documentary hypothesis?**

### Documentary Hypothesis

The documentary hypothesis is the standard explanation and acceptable model for the growth of Pentateuch. Since the bible contains stories of miracles, prophecy and divine teaching, it was subject to biblical scrutiny. Among which are various anachronisms, Mosaic authorship, inconsistencies, duplications and contradicting stories, which suggests that these stories have been put up together from various sources. Documentary hypothesis supposed that a series of editors had worked on the Pentateuch integrating the source by one. Four major sources were identified by a German scholar, Julius Wellhausen (1844-1918) who established the documentary hypothesis. The first and oldest was the Yahwistic source which uses the name LORD or Yahweh (spelled Jahweh in German). It is called as the J source. It consists of stories running through Genesis, first half of Exodus and small portion of Numbers. Next is the Elohist, which refers to God as Elohim. It is a story running in parallel with J source and does not start until Genesis 15. The book of Deuteronomy is the third source, and it is full with exhortations to observe the law, warnings against disobedience, and appeals to God's love. The fourth source is the Priestly source, which contains sections of Genesis, Exodus, Leviticus, and Numbers that deal with worship. The four major sources were originally independent and amalgamated by a single editor at different times. The least of problem lies in that all dates are approximate. The documentary hypothesis rests on two pillars; the identification of the sources and the dating. Both are still being debated today. The concept is rejected by Orthodox Jews and orthodox Christians because it calls into question the bible's inspiration and authority. Biblical scholars have proposed numerous adjustments from time to time.

- 2. Outline and discuss the book of Genesis. What are some of the major themes of the book? Who are some of the major characters of the book? What are some of the critical issues involved in the academic examination of the book of Genesis? What are the strengths and weaknesses of these issues?**

The book of Genesis, outlined below, comprises an introductory section (prologue). This is followed by succeeding sections with recurring phrase, "the generations of" (toledot). The first five use of the toledot structure appears from chapters 2-11 while the remaining appears in chapters 12-50. Abraham's story appears at the end VI, his dominant role in VII plays an integral bridge between the origin of nation of earth and that of the nation of Israel. This pattern of progression of related events shows the unified and neatly arrange composition of the narrator/author. It sets the stage for God's divine plan that has its root on creation. From the earth, Adam will come, and from Adam, Abraham and his offspring will merge until the coming of Jesus Christ. Some of the themes zero in on the uniqueness and oneness of God over other deity, His sovereignty and majesty, plurality in His nature, the creation of human in His image as God's representative to rule the earth in His behalf, the fall of humanity, and God's first promise of redemption. God made Himself known as transcendent and imminent, who revealed Himself through covenant. For centuries, biblical scholars debated and faced critical challenges that questions the traditional historical accuracy of biblical narrative. There are repetitions,

inconsistencies in plots and details of the narratives, anachronisms and also variations in names of God that are different in meaning.

The story of creation (Prologue) 1:1-2:3

- I. The generation of the heavens and the earth (2:4-4:26)
- II. The generations of Adam
- III. The generations of Noah
- IV. The generations of Noah's sons
- V. The generations of Shem
- VI. The generations of Terah
- VII. The generations of Ishmael
- VIII. The generations of Isaac
- IX. The generations of Esau
- X. The generations of Jacob

- 3. Discuss the character of Abraham as detailed in the book of Genesis. How much of book of Genesis details the life of Abraham? How is the promise of Abraham developed in the life of Abraham and the rest of the book of Genesis? How is Abraham depicted in Genesis? Note both his strengths and weaknesses?**

The book of Genesis contains a detailed narrative of the life of Abraham and his descendants. From chapters 12 through 50, the Abrahamic accounts make up 80% of Genesis, easily making them the core of the book. In the account, Abraham is described as having a nephew named Lot and a childless wife named Sarah. From there, the narrative pushes forward to Abraham's defining moments in life. Abraham's first act of obedience is immediate; he and all his household are circumcised. The second act of obedience is even more painful; he is asked to sacrifice his long-promised son, Isaac. Blessings, descendants, land and climactic follow as outlined in 22:11, "in your offspring shall all nations of the earth be blessed, because you have obeyed my voice." This is a guarantee because of Abraham's faithful obedience, and a model for his descendants to imitate. He continuously obeys God's commands in chapters 12, 17, and 22. However, he becomes anxious to resolve dispute amicably in chapters 13 and 21. He intercedes for the city of Sodom and for Abimelech and his household in chapters 18 and 20. He seeks no profit from other's misfortune (ch14) and he takes steps to ensure a decent burial for his wife and to find an appropriate bride for his son Isaac (chs 23 and 24). In another occasion, Abraham's behavior is problematic. He deliberately pretends to be Sarah's sister twice (chs 12, 20), agrees to a surrogate marriage to provide for himself with an heir (ch. 16), and does nothing after his daughter Dinah is raped other than chastise his sons for their vengeance. Although the author of Genesis rarely makes an explicit moral comment, Abraham's behavior does not seem to have dire consequences, but it does seem to slowdown conception of Isaac which was the focus of Abraham's hope. The events all revolve around the promise of divine protection, the acquisition of property, and the birth of children, albeit there are setbacks and delays from time to time. God's promise to Abraham is the same promise He made to the entire human race.