

## I Importance of this argument

If this argument can be proved it will establish the fact of different documents. Is there such a thing as distinctiveness of style? Is it something that can be immediately recognized or not? There is such a thing as difference of style which can be recognized by those who are familiar with that style. If we had a book of 300 pages written by one man and a book of 300 pages written by another, we could go through them and see what their styles were and we could compare them and find certain expressions and types of sentence structure that would be characteristic of one and not of the other.

II However, in the case of the Pentateuch there is no solid basis for establishing a style of distinct writers since no separate documents by these alleged writers have been preserved.

It is purely imaginary that there were once documents written by J, E, P and D. Consequently there is no basis upon which to establish their peculiarities. To have a solid basis for establishing a style of a writer there must first of all be an acknowledged authentic writing by that author. Otherwise there is tremendous danger of arguing in a circle. It will not do to go through portions of the Pentateuch and try to divide it into different sections on the basis of alleged parallel passages and on the basis of differences in the use of Divine names and then try to prove that there is a distinct style in these sections so that one can try to go on and divide up the rest of the Pentateuch according to these styles.

If you put all the passages using a certain word over here and all the passages using a different word over there and you say that the one word occurs only in this document and the other word occurs only in that document, you are the one who has made it that way. You are the one who has given this part a distinctive style as over against that part.