

**Lecture 12: Higher Criticism of the Bible**  
February 10, 2020

Old Testament History	
In the Land	Out of the Land
2000 BC Patriarchs	Egypt 400 yrs. Wilderness 40 yrs.
1000 BC Judges Kings	Babylon 70 yrs.
400 BC Scribes	Roman Empire
AD 70	

Source: [https://www.bible-history.com/geography/maps/map\\_ancient\\_near\\_east.html](https://www.bible-history.com/geography/maps/map_ancient_near_east.html)

**Higher Criticism**

Two Issues

1. Late Date
2. Sources  
(like two Jobs)

Three Areas:

1. Pentateuch – *the five Books of Moses not written by Moses?*
2. Prophets – *Deutero-Isaiah? Late Daniel?*
3. Gospels – *not written by eye-witnesses?*

**Why?** Modern scholars have lived in a Box with scientific naturalism—prophecy is *de facto* impossible.

**Example:** *The Documentary Hypothesis*

J – *Jehovah*  
E – *Elohim*  
D – *Deuteronomist*  
P – *Priestly*

**Proof**

1. Names => different sources
2. Repetition => different sources
3. Contradictions => different sources
4. Styles => different sources
5. Evolutionary Development of Religion – alleged as fact

But...

- ...unprecedented in ANE
- ...prized by the ANE
- ...where's the editor?
- ...risky—by what criteria?
- ...slide from monotheism

**Bottom Line** – naturalistic assumptions

Beyond the question of inspiration, higher criticism attacks basic historicity.

**Historical Question:** *Did the Ancient Near East have a long oral tradition?*

Both cultures developed writing around 3000 BC!

Mesopotamia – cuneiform on clay tablets  
Egypt – hieroglyphics on papyrus

Both cultures preserved knowledge in writing, then recited this knowledge by memory!

Proto-Sinaitic Inscriptions – *first known alphabet* (1500 BC) – where Moses lived, when Moses lived...

Phoenecia → Greece → Rome → English  
(Canaanites)

*Even a boy could write in Canaan, due to the genius of the alphabet—see the symbol, say the sound!*

**The Old Testament has...**

- Literary Sources – e.g. The Book of Jasher
- Literary Forms – e.g. second-Millennium Hittite covenant-treaty
- Literary Rationale – e.g. to be a witness against a rebellious people (Deut. 31, Isa. 30)
- Literary Imprimatur – Jesus said that Moses *wrote* of Him in his *writings* (John 5:45-47)

**Next Class:** *Why do many plagues? What about the Name?*