

4 responses to the God of Israel: a thematic overview

"A river went out of Eden, to water the garden,
and from thence it was parted, and became into four heads." – GEN. 2:10.

	PATRIARCH	PRIEST	PRINCE	PROPHET
GOD IS ...	El Shaddai The All-sufficient Ex 6:2,3	Yahweh The Covenant God Ex 6:4,5; 3:13-17	YHWH/Elohim/Baal (syncretistic)	YHWH Holy One of Israel 5:22,23
CHARACTER	man (theophany) Gen 3:8, 12:1-8; 17:1-8	ox (sacrifice)	lion (Judah's primacy) Gen 49:10	eagle Isaiah 55:8-11
DIVINE ATTRIBUTE	wisdom	holiness (ritual)	power	holiness (moral) grace, covenant faithfulness
AUDIENCE	'the wise'	the temple faithful	Jewish 'principalities' - the power elite	the lowly, dispossessed, downtrodden
EMPHASIS	tribal tradition Job, Joshua 24:14,15	liturgy	preservation of civic, national order 3:1,2	YHWH the God of Israel is also the God of all nations 18:36
VIEW	practical	ritualistic	patriotic (nationalistic?) preserve status quo (thus conservative)	viewed as radical, but in reality MOST conservative
ORIENTATION	present (faith)	past (faith)	present (loyalty)	future (hope, love)
KEY WORD OR PHRASE	walk Gen 3:8, 5:22; 18:16-22	sin	take 1 Sam 8:10-18	give Isaiah 58
KEY TEXT	Gen 15:5,6	Lev 19:1,2	1 Kings 12:3,4	Micah 6:6-8
CAUTION ... FOR CASUAL AND/OR CARELESS READERS (HOW TO AVOID A HERMENEUTICAL MINEFIELD)	Is the 'Kingdom of heaven' heaven? Which people lost the 'kingdom of God'? Upon whom is the blood of Jesus?	Do we see the Son as suffering Servant? Or as 'Son of God' at the 'right hand of Power'? Does He NOW reign from 'the Throne of glory', or from the cross?	Are we 'catholic' like Luke? Is Paul or John our apostle, or do we glean from every ripe field, every worker in God's vineyard? Is the distribution of wealth no business of the church?	A barrel of prooftexts for the apologist? ('A text without a context is a pretext') Are we guilty of feeding the church on milk, and forcefeeding with beef the babes and unborn?

WE are told of St Augustine, that on one occasion, when his mind was much engaged in the contemplation of the doctrine of the Trinity, he was walking by the sea, and saw a child filling a shell with the water, which it then carried and poured into a hollow in the sand. "What are you doing, my boy, with that water?" said the Saint. "I am," replied the child, "going to put all the sea into this hole." The Father smiled and passed on; when a voice seemed to say to him, "And thou too art doing the like, in thinking to comprehend the depths of God in the narrow limits of thy finite mind." – Andrew Jukes, *The Characteristic Differences of the Four Gospels* p.1

For further information:

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|---|---|
| Barclay, William <i>The Gospels & Acts</i> (2 volumes) | Bruce, F.F. in Guelich, Robert A. <i>Unity & Diversity in New Testament Theology: Essays in Honor of George E. Ladd</i> |
| Bernard, T.D. <i>Progress of Doctrine in the New Testament</i> | Cullmann, Oscar <i>Unity through Diversity</i> |
| Brown, Raymond E. <i>Biblical Reflections on Crises Facing the Church</i> | Dunn, James G.D. <i>Unity & Diversity in the New Testament</i> |
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| Brown, Raymond E. <i>Biblical Exegesis & Church Doctrine</i> | Neill, Stephen <i>Jesus through Many Eyes</i> |
| Brown, Raymond E. <i>The Churches the Apostles Left Behind</i> | Scroggie, W. Graham <i>A Guide through the Gospels</i> |
| Brown, Raymond E. <i>Community of the Beloved Disciple</i> | Streeter, Burnett H. <i>The Four Gospels</i> |
| | Westcott, Brooke Foss |