

it is rather difficult to prove that one document is more spiritual than another. Most of the definite arguments deal with religious institutions and practices. We need to examine these claims very carefully. They claim to build on the phenomena of the Old Testament as a whole. They say that the book of Deuteronomy fits with the reforms of Josiah, and that we can therefore conclude that that is the time when it came into existence. It was said that this gave a basis on which to date the other documents, perhaps placing J as early as the time of King Jehoshaphat, and the P document much later.

The critics say that the history fits with this arrangement of the documents. They say that before the reforms of Josiah one could sacrifice anywhere and anyone could sacrifice, but that after that time altars were restricted to Jerusalem. Josiah broke down the high places and restricted sacrifice to Jerusalem, and after that time only the Levites could sacrifice. Then, they say, when you go on to the later period you find not only that sacrifice is restricted to Jerusalem, but that it can be performed only by men descended from Aaron. So it is claimed that there is a development within the documents and that this development corresponds to the facts of history.

It is rather hard to speak about God without using an anthropomorphism, but one is more apt to find anthropomorphisms in a narrative, such as you find in J than in a genealogical table or a list of the kings of Edom, or other material of the kind that is generally allocated to P. It is true that the P document makes no mention of sacrifices prior to the time of Exodus, while sacrifices are mentioned in J and E at earlier periods, but it is easy to get this result. It requires only that all reference to altars or sacrifices at that earlier period be attributed to the J or E document, rather than to P!

Jehovah is the covenant name of God. It is God in relation with His people. When you read about Abraham entering into covenant relation with God and sacrificing to Him, the name you would expect him to use would be Jehovah, rather than the general term, God. When you think of God as the great Creator of the universe, God is the title you are more apt to use.