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capricious little despot whose hate and cruelty are unlimited by any moral consistency of character. It would be very difficult to find a parallel to such a god among any of the gods of the time. One must therefore become suspicious of the methodology which claims to discover such a deity, and to examine more carefully the modifying and contrary evidences in the oldest narratives and collections of law (pp. 12-13).

James D. Smart (The Interpretation of Scripture, Philadelphia: Westminster Press, 1961) follows suit by saying:

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Such a view point is a historical curiosity in the mid-twentieth century. We are only too acutely aware that the natural course of development in religion and morals both for individuals and nations is as often downward as upward. No Old Testament historian of today would any longer be attracted by the old schema, since for him the history of Israel's religion follows a zigzag line, with the primitive and highly developed forms of religion side by side in most periods. But it was convincing to an earlier day and contributed heavily to the triumph of historicism (p. 250).

George E. Mendenhall ("Biblical History in Transition," The Bible and the Ancient Near East, ed. G. Ernest Wright, Garden City, New York: Doubleday & Company, Inc., 1961) writes:

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The generally accepted account of Israel's history and religion produced by Wellhausen and popularized during the late 19th and early 20th centuries survives, to be sure, today. It is especially among non-specialists, that it is accepted as indubitably valid, and particularly among those who would claim the label "liberal," religious as well as secular. Yet, Wellhausen's theory of the history of Israelite religion was very largely based on a Hegelian philosophy of history, not upon his literary analysis. It was an a priori evolutionary scheme which guided him in the utilization of his sources. Such evolutionary schemes have been rejected nearly everywhere else... it is difficult now to see what excuse there is for accepting an evolutionary pattern which would have ancient Israel develop from a primitive animism or even polytheism to ethical monotheism within a period of five or six centuries, when we now have abundant evidence to show that the religious community of ancient Israel emerged not at the beginnings of history, but at the end of a very civilized, sophisticated, and cosmopolitan era. Though there are many scholars who still hold to the evolutionary pattern of Wellhausen, many adjustments in