

The chief syncretisms of importance to us in this course and three well known varieties. I am not going to analyze them in detail but the sought to unite Judaic, Christian, and eastern thought in some more or less harmonious whole...you will remember them as:

- a. the Nazarenes
- b. The Ebionites
- c. the Elkasites

Ebionism may have provided the historic context for the book of Colossians and the theosophic ideals of the Elkasites may be spoken against in the Epistle to the Hebrews. The key word in both cases is "may,"

5. Heretical suggestions

a. Marcion

An early second century heretic, he approximated some Gnostic ideals. The content of his work is discussed in Berkhof: History of Christian Doctrine, p 56 ff. Paul was his chief authority and he saw him as being in antithesis with the other apostles. He accepted only ten of Paul's letters and also the Gospel of Luke as he thought Paul to be the responsible source of the Gospel. Marcion taught a total break in the New and Old Testament worlds and thought the books of each section portrayed two different gods...both of whom were vying for us. The Old Testament God was wrathful and explosive while the God of the New Testament was kind and good. In time the wrathful god will burn all that the good God does not keep for himself so one can see what he needs to do to be kept.

b. Monarchianism

In the idolatrous and polytheistic society of the early church, the first Christians were basically very sure of one thing: their God was king. Monarchianism came from that idea and tended to see only one entity to the God-person. The trinity was denied as being polytheistic and the representative persons of the godhead as mentioned in the Scripture were seen as being manifestations of the same God...a god who just changed masks for the particular setting of the play. Monarchianism (particular as it affected the Father/Son relationship) was known in two forms:

(1) Dynamic Monarchianism

This featured the concept that Jesus was not Divine but was mastered by God. The human Jesus was overcome by the Divine Person and in that sense Jesus could also be spoken of as Divine. There is no divine person as an individualized Jesus...no such person was begotten of the Father. The Father took him over and in that way he became His "beloved son."