

God grows, so to speak, as the documents show him better. In the early documents anthropomorphisms dominate. God acts and is reflected as acting like a man. The concept that he is better than other gods is also early but all concepts of absolutism are late. Passages that depict him as loving, kind, omnipotent or omniscient are also late or pushed in that direction. This is simply a continued development of the simple to complex ideas of the period.

/2/ Communicating with God is another step in the process. It is thought that the names of God used indicate a growth in the concept of God and our communication with Him. In the pre-prophetic material the names of Elohim, Jehovah and the combined names occur and suggest a limited deity with whom conversation is limited. He is more powerful than some others but not totally so.

This is said to be shown in continued settings in the Pentateuch where the nation's founders dealt with God. Genesis 15 (early but not of certain analysis) is contrasted with Genesis 17 (P). The complications of the latter are regarded as superior to the simplification of the former. The contrast is in the covenant making ritual. Genesis 15 is crude: blood, smoke, etc. Genesis 17 is refined: dictated terms and an evidential sign for completion. Hence P shows an advance in the idea of God over J...an advance in the way he is approached, addressed and listened to.

The manner in which God involves man in the business is also instructive. In J-E as in Genesis 9, man has nothing to do with the covenant...he is just a pawn.. but in Genesis 17 he is given responsibility as the communication process is more complex. God is not saying and doing all things himself, he is working through the created being.

/3/ The manifestation of God as mentioned on page 135 is also a subject in the development process. J-E are fond of