

God's immanency in Abraham's response to revelation: from providence to omnipresence

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Abstract: My assertion is that God's biblical image may not reflect entirely His existence in itself as well as His revealed image. Even if God in Himself is both transcendent and immanent at the same time, and He is revealing accordingly in the history of humankind, still the image of God constructed in the writings of the Old Testament is merely the perspective made upon God by His followers to whom He has revealed. That could be the reason why for centuries God's biblical image seems to emphasize more His immanence, starting with Pentateuch, where God cohabites with Adam on Earth, then He reveals Himself to Abraham and Moses and so on. Somewhere, after the Babylonian exile, the image suffers slightly differences tilting towards God's transcendence. In a path already created and grounded by Israel's ancestors, even this new color of transcendence bears the nuances of immanence. How can this be possible? Let's take a look on the revelation received by Abraham from God and see how this can fit the profile. Instead of the transcendence of God regarded by others in the differentness of Yahweh appointed by Abraham in his walking out of Mesopotamia, I will prove otherwise, that Abraham is on the

contrary proving God's immanency in this very differentness of His in relation with other gods by providence and omnipresence, indwelling His creation.

Key words: *differentness, gratefulness, deism, immanence, indwelling, revelation, faithfulness, worship, idols, the guardian spirit, Mesopotamia, land binding, Promised Land, omnipresence, cradle of life*

I. IF THE IMMANENCE WOULD NOT BE A VALID OPTION THEN WHAT?

In this paper we will apprehend what are the affected religious issues when speaking and accepting God's immanency. First of all we can clearly see that a major result of this denial is precisely the threatening of the very existence of religion by the reign of deism; this existence is however proven even by the religious partisans of transcendence, with a different task of course, that of manifesting religiousness and gratefulness by any rational beings to their Creator, no matter if He find this out or not. It is In addition to that there are several other aspects putted at stake by the exclusion of immanency.

One of the problems to discuss here is the religious ground of the versatile relationship between nature and free-will. This dialectical motive originated from secularization of the Christian Idea of creation and freedom, emancipating human personality from its religious dependence upon the God of Revelation. Considering only the transcendence of God, any of His relation with His creation will become superfluous, including God's Revelation. This will be the end of any true, objective meaning given by religions upon everything, e.g. existence of man, of evil, bad or good; everything would go sideways for sure, moral and ethics would no longer exist for there is no axis mundi without a God immanent to his creation. Nothing would be bad any longer, as nothing would be good as well; every ethical consideration will be based only on subjectivity, either it is of a person, society, social context or any other subjectivity. „In a word, the Divine immanence is not the goal of our quest of God, but it is the indispensable starting-point.”[1]

II. WHAT SHOULD WE UNDERSTAND FROM GOD'S IMMANENCE, RELIGIOUSLY SPEAKING?

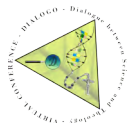
Traditionally, in Christian theology the immanence of God denotes God's being or acting within humankind or within the world, in contrast to God's transcendence, which denotes his being beyond or above humankind or the world. But this contrast alone is too simple. For in Christian theology God is both transcendent and immanent; these terms are complementary, not alternatives. Indeed, pantheism, not theism, regards God as entirely immanent in the world, without qualification. It is more accurate to regard God's immanence as his animating and sustaining the world and humankind by his near presence, and God's transcendence as denoting his otherness, holiness, and difference from the world and humankind. As immanent, God energizes the wills of human beings by his Holy Spirit; as transcendent he is never to be equalized with the world, the "All," or his creatures, and his Spirit is holy. Pantheism and Deism are exaggerations of only one side of this dualism. Popular thought accuses sometimes the liberalism of urging God's immanence, as Karl Barth and others urging his transcendence. But this would be a simplistic caricature, although

one can see why such a caricature is sometimes drawn and that it is not entirely invalid.[2]

When speaking of God's immanency we are talking about His indwelling within His creation, for immanence means nothing more abstruse than "indwelling". According to the revelation given by God – directly or by any means – we don't need to search for Him outside our universe, deep into the darkness or into the light, since "he is not far from any one of us, for in him we live and move and have our being" (Acts 17.27-28). Such a conception that equals in the New Testament immanence-indwelling-omnipresence is a result of a long experience and theology, and not a concept emerged spontaneously without any previous experience whatsoever. This result-conception of immanence-omnipresence would be an interesting issue to be presented in this context, to see what the steps it took to become as shown in Acts 17 were.

A. God's ancient vision in Mesopotamia: the guardian spirit

It is very clear that from the beginning of religion, in general, "god" was always conceived as immanent as could be, all until it ended up in animism, naturalism or Pantheism (e.g. totemism). Mankind needed gods that were so vivid with their presence among us that they could influence the nature of things and events in favor for those they favor. This theological conception of ancient religions led to a certain image of how gods should relate with mankind, that they must be protective and careful with those who sacrifice something for them. Among the pantheon of Mesopotamian gods, Nanna, the moon-god, was the supreme one, because he was the source of fertility for crops, herds, and families. Prayers and offerings were offered to the moon to invoke its blessing. In this context of partisanship – each group-tribe had his protective god who was pitting against any other tribe that had competitive interests – another theological vision emerged, rather similar, yet somehow new, that of Abraham's. He had started with this prevailing image of the guardian spirit for he was born and raised in Ur of the Chaldees (Genesis 11.28) and his father along with all his family worshiped idols as all other inhabitants of Mesopotamia did. "And



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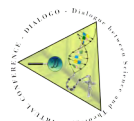
Joshua said to all the people, "Thus says the Lord, the God of Israel, 'Long ago, your fathers lived beyond the Euphrates, Terah, the father of Abraham and of Nahor; and they served other gods.'" (Joshua 24. 2). Then the call of Abraham (Genesis 12.1) occurred from a different God, who wanted his servant to be as different as He is, that is why He asked Abraham to exit from everything knew, his kin, his house, the world known at that time and go to the edge of the world in search for that specific God that didn't indwell in stone or wooden statues. Of course that was the beginning of the transcendent yet immanent God, for He tried everything to convince Abraham and his offspring, the Jews, that He is everything other gods are not. "Put away the gods that your fathers served beyond the River and in Egypt, and serve the Lord" (Joshua 24.14);

In spite of all the differences Adonai proved, his selection over the other gods imitated the same pattern ancient world had, of following the one that guards you. That was the pattern of Mesopotamia imprinted in every words of Adonai and Jews, and I don't consider this not because this is another false lead, instead it demonstrates the simple, immutable human sentiment of faithfulness mirrored also in the divine behavior: "For his loyal love towers over us, and the Lord's faithfulness endures. Praise the Lord" (Psalm 117.2); "Moses reminds them of God's faithfulness and love" (Deuteronomy 1.1). What was then the reason Abraham turned to Adonai instead of going the same religious road his family had ever since? We cannot assume that Abraham knew anything sundry or something important to make him change his religious views and orientation and take on a road completely new, and also accept exile without remorse and second thoughts despite the drawbacks and limitations this different path had. Withal there is no evidence that Abraham was aware of this new, different God prior to the calling He made unto him. So, the only reason left for us to consider his immovable decision is the different way of engaging people Adonai had. Unlike any other known god - distant objects of worship - Yahweh made the first step, a direct, personal contact, exiting anonymity and impassibility and proving he takes care of His followers for real. As a worshiper of other gods, Abraham must have been surprised to receive a direct revelation

from Yahweh and he obeyed God's strange call straight away. That was the engine that made Abraham reject any other so-called god that was incapable to prove himself as guardian other than conjectural and accidental. In other words, Abraham's faith was certainly driven by the same need as anyone else's, the need of protection, of care and redemption from a poor, vicious life, but the reason he turned side to Yahweh was very different from everybody else, for he had witnessed a vivid manifestation of a certain God; that made him change his life and follow his proved protector that had the ability to come into contact with man. The center of Abraham's faith for Yahweh's revelation is undeniable, even if there are many theologians that stress on the differentness of Yahweh comparing with other gods and promote the theology of God's transcendence. This is merely the tradition of modern liberal theology - occasionally influencing some of the Orthodox theologians too - where neo-Orthodox Protestant theologians like Karl Barth (1886-1968) or Judaic rabbi such as Abraham Joshua Heschel (1907-1972) begin their theology not with divine revelation, but with human experience [3]. Coming forward with this emphasis on personal experience, it is hard not to accept the humanly side of religion and that it only makes God more transcendent and impassible. On the contrary, accepting and embracing revelation per se it is then natural to accept that God is immanent and indwelling among us, with us. It is obvious that this event with Abraham can be used for both godly attributes, but let us see further the vision recurrent in Judaic scripture to understand in what way they thought of Yahweh's differentness. "Abraham obeyed God's call, and, when he arrived in the land of Canaan, he built an altar to Yahweh at Shechem (Genesis 12.7). The text indicates that God's appearance to Abraham was a deciding factor in his choosing to worship Him. Hebrews 11.8 says that Abraham's departure from Ur was an example of faith in action." [4] "By faith Abraham obeyed when he was called to go out to a place that he was to receive as an inheritance. And he went out, not knowing where he was going" (Hebrews 11.8).

B. God's indwelling among creation

From the beginning of Abrahamic religion the



way he perceived God was that He is something else, different from other gods that surrounded Abraham. This differentness of Abraham's God holds fast over time for all his descendants, so the same differentness will be observed in Egypt against Egyptians' gods culminating in the first commandment of Decalogue. "I am Adonai your God, who brought you out of the land of Egypt, out of the abode of slavery..." (Exodus 20. 1). Lots of texts emphasize the differentness of God, "describing Him as the 'wholly independent' in which epithet we hear echoes of Proclus's doctrine of the autarky of God"[5]: "Let it be according to your word, that you may know that there is no one like the Lord our God" (Ex. 8.0) and other coming from both sides, either God's or Prophets': Ex. 9.14 "you may know that there is none like Me in all the earth"; 15.11; Dt. 4.35, 39; 33.26; 2 Sa 7.22; 1 Ch. 17.20; Ps 86.8; Is 45.5-8; 46.9; Je 10.6, 7. But all this pleiade of demonstrating the differentness of Yahweh in which Old Testament's Scripture abounds are driven by the same pattern that have boosted Abraham to renounce everything and take the path the revealed God told him to walk: Adonai is the only real, alive God that can protect you for real against anything. There is always ecstasy along with underlining God's incomparability, a joy that Jews are blessed to be chosen to receive His revelation, to be over-watched and guided by Him. "O Lord God, You have begun to show Thy servant Thy greatness and Thy mighty hand, for what god is there in heaven or on earth who can do anything like Thy works and Thy mighty deeds?" (Dt. 3.24). That is why an absolute transcendent conception of God in the context of ancient idolatry is very improbable, even if it is not deniable for several reasons not to be discussed here[6]. Instead it is most certainly an echo of a sentiment of recognition for God's choice "Surely the Lord our God has shown us His glory and His greatness, and we have heard His voice from the midst of the fire." (Dt. 5.24)

Everything in the passages that have spoken about 'God of Abraham' and his descendants underlined that YAHWEH is God unlike any other god. And since all other gods were impregnated with and into the material world – through their animist conception and physical substance that stands as fabric for everything – the new image of God, Adonai, always brings into discussion the issue materialism to deny it. This is the recurrence

of all capital commandments (mitzvah) and the very base of the covenant closed with Jews. Halakhah (The sacred mitzvah, Jewish Law) stresses on the duty to know God, that He exists, He is alive and Eternal (Ex. 20.3), that God is One, a complete Unity (Deut. 6:4)

A text very suggestive on God's indwelling among creation is Psalm 139.7-10:

7. "Where can I go from your Spirit? Where can I flee from your presence?

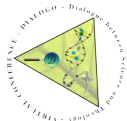
8. If I go up to the heavens, you are there; if I make my bed in the depths[7], you are there.

9. If I rise on the wings of the dawn, if I settle on the far side of the sea,

10. Even there your hand will guide me, your right hand will hold me fast."

By the time these words were written (~1000 BC) there was no presence or threaten from deism or pantheism, that is why the author of Psalm does not matter to suggest His presence everywhere in the material world and beyond (Heavens and Hell). David said that God's presence couldn't be eluded through space (verse 8), speed (verse 9), or darkness (verse 12). In other words, nothing in the universe can hide a person from God[8]. But, to a certain point this can only mean that Gods oversees everything and so it can be only taken as a base for godly sovereignty. It is a reasonable way of considering this kind of understanding God's immanency according to the "world" view at that point. In rabbinic theology the main dogma is not God's omnipresence, but the doctrine of God's omniscience with a major impact on Judaic moral. "This great and self-evident truth, That God knows our hearts, and the hearts of all the children of men, if we did but mix faith with it and seriously consider it and apply it, would have a great influence upon our holiness and upon our comfort"[9]. That means that God's everywhere-ness is not the central issue for the 'elected people', but His all-over-watch-ness is for there is no place on earth that his followers will not be the subject of His protection.

Still, this omnipresence of God's surveillance and watching over creation was hastily conceived as omnipresence of His existence in it, and we have to wonder what the basics of this



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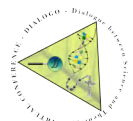
evolution of conceiving the godly omnipresence were.

C. God's differentness: land binding vs omnipresence?

Every wangle of Yahweh to subdue Jews was meant to underline the huge differences between other gods and Him, Adonai. “Do not turn to idols or make for yourselves any gods of cast metal: I am the Lord, your God” (Leviticus 19.2). So, the idea of a God so different from other known gods was the core of Abrahamic adulation and it was transferred to his kin. Psalm 113.5-6: “Who is like the Lord our God, who is seated on high, who looks far down upon the heavens and the earth?” But this idea of Yahweh's differentness was over-exaggerated in a later theological thinking and became His differentness from everything, a transcendent attribute that had nothing to do with the initial understanding and perception that Abraham had for this revealed God. Only with time passing and Jews becoming theologians instead of followers, the ‘the good shepherd’ became ‘God from above’ or ‘the Mighty from the heights’ (Ezek. 34.5; Job 31.1). The parallel between early and late texts of Old Testament [10] – (1) from the book of Genesis (1440-1400 BC) to the first Babylonian captivity Book of Jeremiah and the final section of 2 Kings (686 – 586 BC) and (2) Ezra to Malachi (516 – 400 BC) – “shows that the requirement to bring offerings to the place of Yahweh's choice is explicable in terms of a fundamental theological principle of Deuteronomy, rather than a contingency-plan associated with one or other of the centralizing reforms”[11]. Jeremiah, ‘the new Moses’, insists on the theme of the covenant between God and Israel and unto the fact that this protection of Yahweh is conditional and it can be broken by Israel's apostasy with him following other gods. He, once again, stresses on the differentness of Yahweh and give an extra dimension of this term, incomparability. Jeremiah underlines that the Lord is a jealous, possessive Master that wants all his followers' attention and faithfulness; He promises goods and wealth in return, but the condition is absolute: who wants to serve Him should do this without other religious alternative. Isaiah (his writings dated from the pre-exile period, 757 to 696 BC) emphasizes on

Yahweh's incomparability to other gods – “I am the Lord, and there is no other; Besides Me there is no God” (Isaiah 45.5), while Jeremiah (whose writings are dated 626 to 585 BC, in the time of the 1st Babylonian exile, somewhere between 605- 539 BC) gain already a new interpretation for Yahweh's differentness, now aiming more explicitly towards His omnipresence, but nevertheless he don't lose the line of God's immanence: « “Am I only a God nearby,” declares the LORD, “and not a God far away?” Can anyone hide in secret places so that I cannot see him?” declares the LORD. “Do not I fill heaven and earth?” declares the LORD». (23.23-24).

In consequence, it is unlikely for Jews, until the late 7th century BC, to grow a transcendent theology with Yahweh in the middle and nothing else following this type of theology. I say this because if their theology had been like that, a transcendent one, than it is awkward that, for a long period of time, the only transcendent element for them was God; nothing else in their religious teaching stood to support such an assumption. Starting from the generic ‘promised land’[12] to the whole image of ‘election of God’ – everything is more than mundane, no transcendence, no out-of-this-world-ness. That ‘promised land’ was not even related with Eden, the cradle of life, God's garden, and His place of walking by with Adam. It has nothing to do with remaking what Adam did wrong; in their understanding of Canaan there was not even a slightest idea of rebuilding the lost garden of heaven. ‘A land flowing with milk and honey’ (Exodus 3.8, 17; 13:5; 33:3; Lev. 20:24; Num. 13:27; Dt. 26:9; 26:15; Jer. 11:5; 32:22; Ezek. 20:6) bears the image of Eden without a heavenly recognition of God-man relation's spirituality. The enormous recurrence of this idea was meant to give people a clue about a God that can indwell in different places if He has a partner to live with. Without knowing, Jews' theology of ‘the Canaan’ vis-à-vis ‘Eden’ was but the beginning of the idea that God is everywhere, that He cannot be restricted to a certain place, even if that place is Eden or Canaan. Building a ‘promised land’ elsewhere than in the old emplacement of Eden, was the very ground for God's omnipresence. That was probably one of the reasons the ‘revealed God’ told Abraham to move from Mesopotamia, instead of helping him concur it as the emplacement of what once was Eden. If God had made Abraham king of



that ancient, ancestry cradle of life, He would have most probably built a theology of God's placement, the 'land binding' – one that Jews eventually built, "Our fathers adored on this mountain: and you say that at Jerusalem is the place where men must adore" (John 4.20). But Yahweh has chosen a different path, to make Abraham leave that old place of Eden as a degenerate, corrupt one that had nothing to do with the first God-man encounter anymore; He has instead promised to Abraham that they will rebuild (Latin re-ligo, -are) this true relationship in a different place, a new one, inhabited with people who believe in the true, only 'God of heaven and earth'. [13]

But the fact of God's abiding in a heaven ever so high does not prevent him from being at the same time also on earth. Therefor Yahweh's revelation unto Abraham was just the first in a row of God's demonstration of His indwelling in all the creation. 'God of heaven and earth, and in the highest heavens of heavens' is the text of a prayer recited every day to raise awareness of His presence everywhere. The fact of God's appearing later to Moses in a bush is taken as a proof that there is no spot on earth be it ever so lowly which is devoid of the divine presence [14]. The practical outcome of the current denial of the immanent idea to Rabbinic Judaism is seen in the comparison usually drawn between the "inwardness" of the Christian faith and the "outwardness" of traditional Judaism. [15]

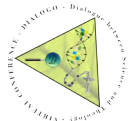
IN CONCLUSION

My assertion is that God's biblical image may not reflect entirely His existence in itself as well as His revealed image. I say this maybe under the influence of a later course on Religious literacy I have attended at Harvard this year, where the main idea was in fact Donna Haraway's concept of "situatedness" [16]. But, my guess is that, even if God is both transcendent and also immanent in the same time and He is revealing to His believers accordingly in the history of humankind, still the image of God constructed in the writings of the Old Testament is merely the perspective made upon God by His followers to whom the he has revealed. That could be the reason why for centuries God's biblical image seems to emphasize His immanence, starting with

Pentateuch, where God cohabites with Adam on Earth, then He reveals Himself to Abraham and Moses and so on. Somewhere, after the Babylonian exile the image suffers slightly differences towards God's transcendence, in a path already created and grounded by Israel's ancestors, even this new color of transcendence bears the nuances of immanence. How can this be possible? I took a look on the revelation received by Abraham from God to see how this can fit the profile I made for God's biblical image. The emerged thesis is somehow different from other biblical exegesis and it could be add to them.

Looking at the construction of the ideas in the Old Testament, St. Augustin said once that "In the Old Testament the New Testament is concealed; in the New Testament the Old Testament is revealed" developing from the typological theory of biblical interpretation. This method was inaugurated by St. Paul and later posed in contrast with the allegorical interpretation applied to narratives in the Hebrew Scriptures by the Jewish philosopher Philo (died A.D. 50). For the former method the key persons, actions, and events in the Old Testament are viewed as "figurae" (Latin for "figures") which are historically real themselves, but also "prefigure" those persons, actions, and events in the New Testament that are similar to them in some aspect, function, or relationship. On the contrary, for the latter these are something similar to myths as allegorical representations of abstract cosmological, philosophical, or moral truths. Origen, for instance, said that Abraham's marriage to Keturah was not actual, but represents that there is no end to the getting of wisdom.

In the light of "situatedness" I think that real facts, characters and events occurred in biblical period of OT were regarded from the perspective of a fugitive people, who needed help and protection to demarcate itself from the surrounding tribes and peoples, and who get this divine intervention on Abraham as an aid for their purpose. Instead, Abraham was a biblical character that somehow does not fit into the profile of most others in OT and I say that because the new religion emerged in Egypt from his kin and as a consequence of God's blessing upon him (Genesis 12.1-3) and carried on for his



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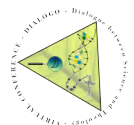
offspring till the end of time (Genesis 28.3), had a paradoxical appellation. It bears the name of Moses – Mosaic faith, leMoshe miSinai ("given to Moses on Sinai"), and not of that who inherited the 'promised land' over his strong belief and uncorrupted faithfulness, Abraham. Therefore, a religion grew from the blessed offspring of Abraham turned its attention to the lawgiver Moses, but invoked always the fundamental reason why this religion even exists, Abraham's faithfulness and his call from God, «And he (Adonai, n.n.) said (to Moses, n.n.), "I am the God of your father, the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob.» (Exodus 3.7 etc.).

The fact that the image of Yawheh has this construction in the writings of OT proves that the revelation of God is not necessarily incomplete in OT – as St. Augustin implied on St. Paul's words, "All these people were known for their faith, but none of them received what God had promised. God planned to give us something very special so that we would gain eternal life with them" (Hebrews 11.39-40). From this view God's self-revelation is like a construct, brick by brick, to a final truth; but this theory cannot face the reproof that the biblical revelation has contradictions and it tries to cover them with the Augustinian principle. My paper proves that God is transcendent and immanent in Himself and is reveling accordingly from the beginning, no changes, no contradictions, only the same truth, revealed as it is. "God is not like people. He tells no lies. He is not like humans. He doesn't change his mind." (Numbers 23.19) Because of His immutability "Jesus Christ is the same yesterday, today, and forever" (Hebrews 13.8). But for people who received this revelation the obvious truth was always seen from their perspective, from their situation and position, as 'elected people'. „The immanent factor, as well as the transcendent one, defining and conditioning the existence of a nation, supporting its guidelines of life, bind in a certain order and constitute a law of its existence. The 'Law of nation' is a notion that concerns only those moral rules that people of the land obey in their behavior in accordance with their inland structure, so that they become in their out manifestation, what they actually are in their essence. For these people, the 'law of the land' is inseparable not only to their consciences, but also to their existence.”[17]

A religion without transcendence, steeped in the fullest immanence becomes a utilitarian religion [18]. Since the immanence of divinity, preserved in its purest form, comes to be confused with the world in pantheism, as transcendence lacking of immanence halts in deism. On the other hand, in the absence of immanence, any religion is deprived of its centerpiece, Divine Revelation. Without any manifestation whatsoever from a being it cannot be known or even thought – the ontological argument read in reverse. „If He is to be known at all to us, He can only be so known by being manifested through His presence within, or action upon, the finite and comprehensible sphere. In other words, it is primarily as He is revealed in and through the finite world, that is to say as immanent, that God becomes knowable to us.”[19]

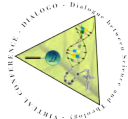
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- [3] Shai Held, Abraham Joshua Heschel: *The Call of Transcendence*. Indiana, USA: Indiana University Press, 2013, 72. As the author underlines, these types of liberal thinkers reject the few possibilities God's revelation has to bring God down to man; „he commences not by asking what it is that God has revealed, but rather...by asking what aspects of human nature and experience can render us receptive to revelation” and this makes Revelation not important for what it says, but for the fact that it can be perceived by certain persons. And this leads us to another problem: was Abraham special build to receive the word (radical predestination), or he was only elected by God to receive it, without anything special but his power of believing and following this path (and that is only a prove of forth-seeing of God over the choice Abraham would have made unlike others).
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- [6] At least we can point out for some texts that were taken into consideration by k. Barth to sustain the '*Deus absconditus*', the hidden God conception: Ex 19.18-19 "the Lord descended upon it (Sinai) in fire. Its smoke ascended like the smoke of a furnace, and the whole mountain quaked greatly", Dt 4.33 "Did any people ever hear the voice of a god speaking out of the midst of the fire, as you have heard, and still live?", et. al. See more in Alan J. Hauser and Duane F. Watson (editors), *A History of Biblical Interpretation, Vol. 2: The Medieval Through the Reformation Period*. Cambridge: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 2009, 50, 313 etc.
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- [8] Don Stewart, *Is God Everywhere at Once? (Omnipresent)*, at http://www.blbclassic.org/faq/don_stewart/stewart.cfm?id=364
- [9] <http://www.biblestudytools.com/commentaries/matthew-henry-complete/psalms/139.html>
- [10] See the **Wellhausen hypothesis** to Julius Wellhausen, *Prolegomena zur Geschichte Israels*. Berlin, 1882; 3rd ed., 1886; Eng. trans., Edinburgh, 1883, 1891; 5th German edition, 1899; first published in 1878 as *Geschichte Israels*; English translation *Prolegomena to the History of Ancient Israel*, Forgotten Books, 2008, ISBN 978-1-60620-205-0. Also available on Project Gutenberg, http://www.gutenberg.org/ebooks/4732?msg=welcome_stranger.
- [11] James Gordon McConville, *Law and Theology in Deuteronomy*. Great Britain: Journal for the Study of the Old Testament Press, 1986, 61.
- [12] In fact, ארץ (eh'-rets) "land," is the fourth most frequent substantive in the Hebrew Bible. H. H. Schmid, "ארץ" *Theologisches Handwörterbuch zum Alten Testament*, Ernst Jenni and Claus Westermann, eds. (Munich: Chr. Kaiser Verlag, 1971), 1:227-35, esp. 234.
- [13] There are also many other elements in Judaic theology before Christ that indicates their conception of a mundane kingdom, co-inhabited by Yahweh and his followers, but it is not the place or the length of this paper to discuss them further. E.g. the place of universal judgement will be on Earth, in the Valley of Jehoshaphat (Joel 3.2) – this kind of judgement Judaism asserts has this mundane dimension for it serves only the interests of 'elected people', Israel. Situated in the desert of Teqo'a near Khirbet Berékût, west of the Khirbet Teqû'a (about eleven miles from Jerusalem), this place that should be accompanied with fever and tremors for the mighty judgement of the Right One, this valley is instead euphemistically called by the Jews èmèq Beràkâh ("valley of blessing") for it will be the place where Yahweh will bring glory to Jews over the other nations. Somehow, this landscape remains in the Christian eschatology even if it aims toward a transcendent, universal, unbiased judgement, a mistake understandable due to the Judaic authorship of Book of Revelation.
- [14] S. Schechter, M.A., Litt.D., *Some aspects of rabbinic theology*. New York: The Macmillan Company, 1999, 29.
- [15] J. Abelson, M.A., D. Lit., *The Immanence of God in Rabbinical Literature*. London: Macmillan and Co., 1912, 15.
- [16] The historian of science Donna Haraway's assertion that "situated knowledges" are more accurate than the "god-trick" of universal or objective claims that rest on the assumption that it is possible to "see everything from nowhere." Contrary to popular opinion, the recognition that all knowledge claims are "situated" is not a manifestation of relativism whereby all interpretations are considered equally valid. Rather, "situated knowledges" offer the firmest ground upon which to make objective claims that are defined not by their detachment but rather by their specificity, transparency and capacity for accountability.



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- [17] Pr. Prof. dr. Ilie Moldovan, *Actualitatea gândirii părintelui Dumitru Stăniloae cu privire la etnic și etnicitate*, în „Caietele Universității „Sextil Pușcariu” - Brașov Anul II • Nr.2 • vol. III – 2002, 44. Sursa online: https://archive.org/stream/Dumitru_Staniloae-Arhiereul_Ortodoxiei_Romanesti/Dumitru_Staniloae-Arhiereul_Ortodoxiei_Romanesti_djvu.txt.
- [18] Michel Onfray, *Contre-histoire de la philosophie. V. L'Eudémonisme social*. trad. in Romaine de Dan Petrescu. Iași: Polirom, 2010, 49.
- [19] J. Warschauer, *Problems of immanence: studies critical and constructive*. The Project Gutenberg EBook, 2007, 12.

