Yahweh
and
His
World
ILLUSTRATED

Richard L. Atkins
YAHWEH And His WORLD
Illustrated

by Richard L. Atkins
YAHWEH SABAOTH
This book is dedicated
to the memory of
H. J. Soulen,
Bible illustrator,
for his contribution
to authenticity
in religious art.

Note: Henry J. Soulen’s artistic reproductions of life in Bible times have appeared in various issues of the National Geographic magazine and also in the book Everyday Life In Bible Times by the National Geographic Society.
INTRODUCTION

SIMULATED HEBREW ART

The ancient Hebrews generally lacked a developed iconography of their religion, since the use of pictorial images was proscribed. Nevertheless, there was a degree of laxity in applying this regulation, so that animal forms (lions, bulls, cherubs) could be used in their Temple. Also, the archaeological record of Israel shows a quite free usage of images on coins, seals, and furnishings.

Until recently it was deemed unlikely that any Hebrew artisan would have produced or exhibited a concrete likeness of Yahweh, the supreme Deity. But in 1975 that supposition was disproved by the discovery of an image of Yahweh on potsherds from Kuntillet Ajrud in the Sinai region. And the image depicting the Hebrew God was a very scandalous one - showing Him as a naked man with large genitals and the head of a bull! (See page 96.) Obviously the representation of Yahweh as a bovine Deity (like Baal), although forbidden on one occasion as a golden calf, was still a part of Hebrew worship.

Thus, although Hebraic material is scarce, this does not entirely preclude the reconstruction of likenesses of Yahweh, of supernatural beings, or of any component of the ancient mythical cosmology. There are two sources available for the modern artist to use in depicting what the Hebrews had in mind when they contemplated their world and their faith. These sources are: 1) the word-pictures in the Bible, and 2) the iconographs of the ancient Near East. Numerous artifacts attest to the prolific rate at which Egyptian, Canaanite, Babylonian, Assyrian, and Hittite image-makers produced their idols and sacred illustrations.

Canaanite artisans constructed the Jewish Sanctuary at Jerusalem, and so, it is only natural that Phœnician art should have heavily influenced Hebrew thought forms. For this reason, the accompanying pictures lean to a large degree upon quasi-Egyptian Canaanite iconography - to produce what might have been Hebraic illustrations of the World of Yahweh, had they been permitted. 

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Theophanic Likenesses of Yahweh
### SCRIPTURAL REFERENCES TO
### THE LIKENESS OF YAHWEH

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<td>He has a Flaming Sword.</td>
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<td>He has a Beard (badge of manhood).</td>
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| He resembles other Deities,  
  being related to them as their Superior, 
  the “God of gods.”                                                    | Psalm 82:1,6                   |
|                                                                             | 89:5-7, 136:2                  |
|                                                                             | Jeremiah 23:18                 |
|                                                                             | Daniel 2:47                    |
|                                                                             | Deuteronomy 10:17              |
YAHWEH OF THE STORM CLOUD
THE CHANGING ASPECT OF DEITY

Jahweh 
Elohim 
(Ancient of Days)

Adonai 
Prospus 
(Cabbala)

Jehovah 
God 
(Wm. Blake)

R. Atkins
THE CHANGING LIKENESS OF GOD

Religious iconography of the ancient Near East provides numerous examples of the likenesses of the Semitic gods, in relation to which Yahweh was simply conceived as the most eminent Deity, the Highest “God of gods.” Also, vivid mental images of the Hebrew Deity found ample expression in the sacred writings of Israel. Colorful anthropomorphic language employed in the Bible quite candidly described Yahweh as a glorified Being on the same pattern as the human-formed Greek deities.

The physical conception of Yahweh was not static, however, and during Bible times it actually evolved through three distinct stages.

At first, when Israel was a new and warlike nation, her God was conceived to be the fearful archetype of a young, virile champion of battle. This was affirmed by the declaration “Yahweh is a warrior!” (Exodus 15:3). Also, the yearling bull (“golden calf”) symbolized the youthfulness and power of Yahweh. A favorite name of God in this aspect was “Lord Yahweh Sabaoth” (Yahweh of “Hosts” or “Armies”). Just as Mars typified the ideal Roman soldier, so was Yahweh envisioned, black-bearded, red-eyed, loud-voiced, giant-sized, and full panoplied in Hebrew fashion as the mighty Champion of His people.

Then later, when Israel had become an established and settled state, the divine Lawgiver and righteous Judge was envisioned as a venerable Jewish elder.

And finally, at the highest stage of the maturing process, the divine nature of mercy and love came to the fore in the revelations of the later prophets and of Christ. It was at this point that God became a pure, unbounded Spirit and the ideal Parent of mankind – the universal heavenly Father.
Forms of Theophany
The Eyes of Yahweh are in every place...
Proverbs 15:3
For a man's ways are before the Eyes of Yahweh...
Proverbs 5:21
The Eyes of Yahweh keep watch over knowledge...
Proverbs 22:12
THE BAALIM OF THE SEMITIC PEOPLES

Baal Yahweh of Israel
Baal Yahweh Perazim (2 Sam. 5:20)
Baal Chemosh of Moab (Num. 21:29)
Baal Chemosh of Peor (Num. 25:3)
Baal Milcom of Ammon (1 Ki. 11:5)
Baal Melcham of Canaan (Phoenicia)
Baal Hadad of Aram (Syria)
Baal Hadad of Zaphon (Num. 33:7)
Baal Rimmon of Damascus (2 Ki. 5:18)
Baal Rimmon of Hazor (2 Sam. 13:23)
Baal Zebul (Beelzebub) of Philistia
Baal Dagan of Philistia (Jud. 16:23)

Bel Marduk (Merodach) of Babylon

Bealiah means “Baal Is Yahweh” (1 Chron. 12:5)
Bealiada (1 Chron. 14:7) = Eliada (2 Sam. 5:16)

Baal means “Owner,” “Proprietor,” “Husband”
(cf. Beulah: Married - to Yahweh)

Henotheism: belief in the supremacy of one's own tribal god over the gods of other peoples (Ex. 18:11, 20:3, Ps. 82:1,6, 89:5-7, Jer. 23:18, Gen. 6:2, Job 1:6, Jud. 2:11-13).

Emblems of the Baalim: Young Bull (Aurochs), Storm Cloud, Fire (Lightning), Arrows, War Club

“When the average citizen of (Israel) prostrated himself before Yahweh, he could scarcely have explained which god he was worshipping, for El had passed into Baal and he into El-Shaddai, and all into Yahweh, the god of Moses...  (The Source by James A. Michener)
THE DIVINE TRIAD

ABRAHAM AND THE THREE VISITORS
Abraham's Covenant Theophany
(Gen. 15:7-20)

THE FIRE POT
(KJV "Furnace")
Signifies the coming trial in Egypt.
(Gen. 15:13)
It is God's crucible for refining His chosen people.
(Num. 31:23, Psalm 66:10, Jer. 9:7, Zech. 13:9, 1 Pet. 4:12)

DELIVERANCE

THE TORCH
(KJV "Lamp")
Signifies the coming deliverance from Egypt.
(Gen. 15:16)
It is a preview of the Fiery Pillar of the Exodus.

Use of Divided Carcasses in Making Covenants
"Cutting a covenant" (הָרִית hārîth) was a common expression in the Old Testament. In Exodus 3:10 Yahweh said, "Behold, I cut a covenant." Contracting parties passed between the severed pieces to seal a treaty. It was a Roman custom to kill a slave and swear to a contract over his body.
JACOB AND DIVINE MAN (YAHWEH)
The Vision of Isaiah
2 SAMUEL 22

1 "Then the earth reeled and rocked; the foundations of the heavens trembled and quaked, because he was angry.
2 Smoke went up from his nostrils, and devouring fire from his mouth; glowing coals flamed forth from him.
3 He bowed the heavens, and came down; thick darkness was under his feet.
4 He rode on a cherub, and flew; he was seen upon the wings of the wind.
5 He made darkness around him his canopy, thick clouds, a gathering of water.
6 Out of the brightness before him coals of fire flamed forth.
7 The Lord thundered from heaven, and the Most High uttered his voice.
8 And he sent out arrows, and scatterèd them; lightning, and routed them.
BATTLE THEOPHANY OF THE WAR GOD

Blessed be Yahweh, my Rock,
Who trains my hands for War
And my fingers for Battle,
My Rock and my Fortress,
My Stronghold and my Deliverer,
My Shield and He in Whom I take Refuge,
Who subdues the Nations under Him...

Bend the Heavens, O Yahweh, and come down!
Touch the Mountains that they smoke!
Flash forth Lightning and scatter them!
Send out Thy Arrows and rout them!
Psalm 144:1,2,5,6

Then the Earth quivered and quaked;
The Foundations of the Mountains trembled;
They quivered because He was angry.

Smoke went up from His Nostrils,
And devouring Fire from His Mouth;
Glowing Coals flamed forth from Him.

He bent the Heavens and came down,
Thick Darkness was under His Feet,
He mounted a Cherub and flew;
He soared on the Wings of the Wind,
He made Darkness His covering around Him,
His Canopy thick Clouds of watery Darkness.

Out of the Brightness before Him
His dark Clouds bore onward
Hailstones and Coals of Fire.
Yahweh thundered in the Heavens also,
And Elyon made His Voice heard,
Hailstones and Coals of Fire.

And He sent out His Arrows and scattered them;
He flashed forth Lightnings and routed them...

He reached from on High,
He took me,
He drew me out of many waters.
He delivered me from my strong Enemy,
And from those who hated me,
For they were too mighty for me.
Psalm 18:7-14,16,17
(cf. 2 Samuel 22)
The Merkabah
(Chariot-Throne)
Vision of Ezekiel
YAHWEH AND WAR CHARIOT WITH DEBER (PLAGUE) AND RESHEPH (PESTILENCE)
The Burning Bush

Now Moses was keeping the flock of his father-in-law, Jethro, the Midianite priest (of Yahweh); and he led his flock to the west side of the wilderness, and came to Horeb (or Sinai), the mountain of God. And the Yahweh-Angel appeared to him in a flame of fire out of the midst of a bush; and he looked, and beheld! the bush was burning, yet it was not consumed. And Moses said, "I will turn aside and see this great sight, why the bush is not burnt." When Yahweh say that he turned aside to see, God called to him out of the bush, "Moses, Moses!" And he said, "Here am I." Then He said, "Do not come near; put off your shoes from your feet, for the place on which you are standing is holy ground." And He said, "I am the God of your father, the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob." And Moses hid his face, for he was afraid to look at God.

EXODUS 3.
(Exodus 19:18-20) And Mount Sinai was wrapped in smoke, because Yahweh descended upon it in fire; and the smoke of it went up like the smoke of a kiln, and the whole mountain quaked greatly. And the sound of the trumpet grew louder and louder; Moses spoke, and God answered him in thunder. And Yahweh came down upon Mount Sinai, to the top of the mountain; and Yahweh called Moses to the top of the mountain, and Moses went up.

(33:11) Thus Yahweh used to speak to Moses face to face, as a man speaks to his friend.

(20:16) Now when all the people perceived the thunderings and the lightnings and the sound of the trumpet and the mountain smoking, the people were afraid and trembled; and they stood afar off.

God said, (19:13b) When the trumpet sounds a long blast, they shall come up to the mountain.

(24:9,10) Then Moses and Aaron, Nadab, and Abihu, and seventy of the elders of Israel went up, and they saw the God of Israel; and there was under his feet as it were a pavement of sapphire stone, like the very heaven for clearness.

(24:17) Now the appearance of the Glory of Yahweh was like a devouring fire on the top of the mountain in the sight of the people of Israel.

(Psalms 18:9) He bowed the heavens, and came down; thick darkness was under his feet.
MOSES IN THE CLEFT OF THE ROCK
THE ARK OF THE COVENANT
YAHWEH SENDS THE LYING SPIRIT TO SPEAK THROUGH THE LYING PROPHETS

1 SAMUEL 18:10, 1 KINGS 22:19-22
HENOTHEISM: THE CONCEPT OF A CHIEF GOD ABOVE OTHERS
DIVINE COUNCIL: SEVEN ARCHANGELS (WITH SATAN). BOVINE CHERUBS AND SERPENTINE SERAPHS GUARD THE THRONE.
THE PATRON ANGEL OF ISRAEL, MICHAEL, FIGHTS FOR ISRAEL

Daniel 7:13, 10:13, 21, 12:1

The Prince of Israel Contends with the Princes of Persia and Greece
The Countenance of Jahweh

2 Sam. 22:9
Ps. 80:16

ATKINS
CHRIST IN SEVEN-FOLD CROWNED TIARA

The Face of the Glorified Christ

Rev. 1:16, 19:12, 13
5:12
MOSES AND ELIJAH WITH THE GLORIFIED CHRIST
(AT THE TRANSFIGURATION AND THE ASCENSION)