



# The Hebrew God: Portrait of an Ancient Deity

*Bernhard Lang*

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## **The Hebrew God: Portrait of an Ancient Deity** Bernhard Lang

Originally worshipped by the people of a small and politically insignificant eastern Mediterranean community, the Hebrew God rose to become the monotheistic deity of the entire Western tradition. In this absorbing book, well-known biblical scholar Bernhard Lang provides for the first time a full portrait of the ancient Hebrew God. Drawing on all available evidence, including ancient Near Eastern and Egyptian texts and art, Lang offers a comprehensive view of the Hebrew God that is both fascinating and surprising.

Lang's portrait shows the Hebrew God in five images. He appears as lord of wisdom, lord of war, lord of the animals, lord of the individual, and lord of the harvest—a God whose rule extends to all areas of life. Lang illuminates the completeness of this God's leadership with insights derived from modern religious, anthropological, and cultural studies, and he argues that Israel's monotheistic God, far from being simply opposed to other gods, actually echoes and incorporates much of the ancient polytheistic experience of the divine. The worldview of the ancient Semites did not differ from that of the Indo-European peoples as dramatically as others have assumed, Lang contends. Written in an accessible style, this appealing volume stores a wealth of information for general reader and religious historian alike.

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