

## THE FOUR DEITIES OF "THE WEST"

**Abraham** would be amazed at at least three of the four religions naming him as lineal ancestor, but secularists & Buddhist missionaries in the USA are delighted with the family tree: by getting rid of Abraham & all he symbolizes, they think to rid themselves of the West's religions & religious heritage (& they aren't bothered by the nicety that some Jews & most Muslims dislike being lumped together with Christians & devotees of Christian derivatives as "the West"). (Similarly, Paul [Ro.1-3] draws a circle & includes everybody in "sin," that "grace" may be seen as necessary for all.)....Please, not to be offended if your deity seems parodied; mine (if different from yours) is also. I'm aiming for maximum **distancing** of the four from one another, & that stretches-distorts all four as I (for this Thinksheet) "speak up for diversity."

### ADONAI (YHWH)

The Jewish deity who to Moses revealed his proper name, YHWH, called "Lord" (Adonai) because--for sound religious reason--his name is considered too holy for humans to utter. Characteristics: holiness, power, justice, mercy-compassion-love, presence. Chooses, protects, guides Israel to be a witness for him as "a light to the nations."

### JESUS

is the distinctive personal name of the Christian deity. "Distinctive": by calling the Hebrew Scriptures + their Greek Apocrypha "the Old Testament," they claim also the personal name of the Jews' God; and by "the Lord" they mean both, as "Kurios" was in their first whole Bible (all in Greek: LXX + NT). Characteristics: he participates in YHWH's characteristics, heightens certain accents of Israel's prophets, did not stay dead when executed, & promised his disciples his presence in Spirit & his return.

Since Jesus & all his disciples during his lifetime were Jews, it was natural for early Christianity (seen in NT & AF [Apostolic Fathers]) to read its experience & existence in the light of Israel's story--the patriarchs (especially Abraham), Moses, David, the prophets, the priests, the sages. But the religion's originating, birthing experience was spiritualistic. Spiritualism is communication with the dead--an oxymoron, for the communication proves the dead undead, ie in some sense(s) living. After the crucifixion, Jesus did indeed communicate with his disciples, & continues with us "in the Spirit." Spiritualism is thoroughly unJewish & (eg ISam.28) abhorrent: Christianity was not the gentile form of Judaism but an alien religion appropriating to itself Jewish furnishings, including Jewish history.

### ALLAH

is Muslims' distinctive name for their deity. The founder of Islam was almost certainly a Christian (under the influence of an uncle), but he reverted to Arab paganism (jinns, kismet, etc.) after a profound mystical experience in which he claimed the Qoran was verbally dictated to him by Allah, the supreme protoArabic deity. The cave experience was syncretistic, melding biblical religion (Judaism & Christianity) into native Arab religion. The pagan base of Islam was & is abhorrent to both Christians & Jews. Islam is not the Arab form of biblical religion but an alien religion appropriating to itself biblical furnishings, including the Jewish and the Christian histories.

What irritated me into writing this Thinksheet is my repeated encounter, lately, of the notion that Judaism, Christianity, & Islam are "the Abrahamic religions." The implication is that they've a common **root**, whereas they have in Abraham only a common **reference**. The truth is that they're radically different, disparate faiths that seem similar only in the light of comparison with the nonhistorical religions of the East. Within the false implication is the thought: Since the three are offspring of Abraham, why can't they get together? The closer you get to them, the better you know them, the less sense that question makes.

### THE GOD/DESS

is, though yet unnamed, the deity of "women-church," one of two recent forms of feminist religion, the other being wicca. Acknowledging that the biblical God is dominantly masculine, this religion maximizes the divine-feminist biblical materials & draws both differentia & sanctions from both history of religions & philosophy of religion. One of its projects is to create its own scripture by rewriting the Christian Bible.