

The Style of P

Weiser, p. 135

sharply differentiated from the other sources by its language, style, theological outlook. Earliest to be recognized by scholars and to be disentangled.

p. 136

The schematic arrangement visible in P can be traced right through down to the stylistic shaping of the individual literary paragraphs. The Priestly Book is distinguished from the other sources by its linguistic usage as well

It uses bara to describe the creative activity of God
It says "to establish a covenant" (J: "to make a cov.")
The months are indicated by figures

Only in isolated passages does P give greater detail in Gen. namely, in the story of creation, in the story of the flood, the covenant with Noah(6-9), when circumcision was introduced into the covenant with Abraham in 17, when the hereditary burial-place for the patriarchs was bought in 23.

p. 137

illustrations of doublets, discrepancies in P

Kuhl, p. 59

the document is in general concise, laconic, and essentially restrained, avoiding the details which alone led life and colour to a description. In the places where somewhat more detail is found, a particular intention bound up with the cult is immediately evident.

59,60

. . . no mention is made in P of any sacrificial offering or any place of worship in pre-Mosaic times

G. W. Anderson,
p. 46

The distinctive style of (P) is more obvious in translation than its equally distinctive vocabulary. Examples of the latter are

The verb "to create" (bara)

The expression "to establish(the) covenant) in contra. to the usual "to cut a covenant")

Congregation

These are the generations of . . .

As in E, Elohim (not Yahweh) is used of God before the revelation to Moses; but El Shaddai . . . is also used.

As in J, the Mt. of God is called Sinai

p.46,47
47

In P the transcendence of God is emphasized
Anthropomorphisms are, on the whole, avoided(but note, e.g. that God is said to rest on the 7th day.,Gen.2.3)

B. W. Anderson,
p. 391

P does not escape anthropomorthic language as when he uses

Driver, LOT, 129

The literary style of P is strongly marked. . . . P is stereotyped, measured, and prosaic.

Peake's Commentary, Numbers, N.H. Snaith (1962)

p. 262 on Num. 16.22 The phrase 'God of the spirits of all flesh' is a P-phrase, found only here and 27:16. It shows the advanced ideas of P, wherein Yahweh is indeed the God of Israel and has his covenant established with them, but is also the maker of all men, on whom 'all flesh' (i.e. all human beings) are dependent for every breath they draw, . . .