

Other Primary Hebrew Names for God

Judge

שֹׁפֵט - *Shophet*

Abraham pleads for Sodom. (Gen 18:25)¹

Far be it from you to do such a thing—to kill the righteous with the wicked, treating the righteous and the wicked alike. Far be it from you! Will not the *Judge of all the earth* do right?” (Gen 18:25)

1. Depending on its context, the above Hebrew word for “judge” is typically translated as governor, ruler, defender, deliverer, or judge.
2. Earthly judges and kings were to function as God’s representative (Deut 1:16-17) and were especially responsible for guarding the rights of the poor, the orphan, the alien and sojourner, as well as the widow and fatherless (Ps 72:1-4; 82:1-8; 146:7-9; Exo 22:21-27; Ja 1:27) This is why Solomon prayed for wisdom. (1 Ki 3:19)
3. The concept of God as the judge is prevalent in Scripture (e.g., Job 9:15; Isa 40:13ff; Job 38:1ff; 40:3; Hab 3:2; John 5:22–27; Rom 11:33-36; 12:17-21; 1 Pe 4:5), as are the variations of this name in the Bible; e.g., the psalmists consistently seek vindication from the LORD, the Judge of the earth. (cf. Ps 94:2, a psalm particularly dedicated to this theme and one sung in Jewish life on their fourth day of the week.)
4. God is not just the LORD, king, and judge of Israel, because he is in covenant with them, but he is also so, because he is the Creator, the Judge of all the *earth*! As such:
 - a. Israel’s mission was to show to the nations “the way of the LORD.”
 - b. God’s ways were relevant to not just Israel but to all the nations (Lev 20:23); Amos 1:2-2:16 proclaims God’s judgment against both Israel and the nations, for straying from these ways.
 - c. God destroys Sodom and Gomorrah, because of their disregard for his universal moral law.
5. Given the above point, it’s helpful to note a misconception about justice and instruction, especially in our post-modern world where “law” has gotten a bad name. Law, order, and justice is often discarded because it has become freighted with legalism (“do this and live”), a concept of “cross this line and I will make you pay for it,” or the placement of value towards one person as compared to another based on one being good and the other bad. There is no one good, but God. As recipients of God’s unmerited love, we’re called to show true humility and love to everyone – regardless of their age, ethnicity, lifestyle, or creed. Further, no one can consistently read Ps 119 and not get the impression that the Torah is delightful ... and life giving. Fortunately, the Torah has always meant God’s revelation of his ways that bring peace between him and us and life to our communities. As such, Torah is better understood as God’s gracious instruction given to us that we might experience life and peace. And, God’s judgments, which come about when his ways are abandoned, are best seen as his loving actions meant to draw people back into life and away from death; they’re meant to point us to Jesus’ salvific work and redemption that is made available to all.
6. Related names:

¹ šōpēt = Sho-PHET; κρίνω

- a. Job 34:16-19: If you have understanding, hear this; listen to what I say. Can he who hates justice govern? Will you condemn the **just and mighty One**? Is he not the One who says to kings, “You are worthless,” and to nobles, “You are wicked,” who shows no partiality to princes and does not favor the rich over the poor, for they are all the work of his hands? (צַדִּיק כַּבִּיר, ṣaddîq kabîr).
 - b. Ps 7:11: God is a **righteous judge**, a God who expresses his wrath every day (אֱלֹהִים שׁוֹפֵט, ʾĕlōhîm šôpēṭ ṣaddîq).
 - c. Ps 94:2: Rise up, **O Judge of the earth**; pay back to the proud what they deserve (יְהוָה שׁוֹפֵט, šôpēṭ hāʾāreṣ).
 - d. Isa 28:5-6: In that day the LORD Almighty will be a glorious crown, a beautiful wreath for the remnant of his people. He will be a **spirit of justice** to him who sits in judgment, a source of strength to those who turn back the battle at the gate (רוּחַ מִשְׁפָּט, rūaḥ mišpāt).
 - e. Isa 30:18: The LORD is a **God of justice**. Blessed are all who wait for him (יְהוָה מִשְׁפָּט, ʾĕlōhê mišpāt)!
 - f. Jer 11:20: But, O LORD Almighty, you who **judge righteously** and **test the heart and mind**, let me see your vengeance upon them, for to you I have committed my cause (שׁוֹפֵט שְׂדֵדָה, šôpēṭ ṣedeq and בֹּהֵן כְּלָיוֹת וְלֵב, bōhēn kʾlāyōṭ wālēb).
 - g. Eze 7:9: I will repay you in accordance with your conduct and the detestable practices among you. Then you will know that it is I **the LORD who strikes the blow** (יְהוָה מַכֶּה, yhw̄h makkeh).
 - h. Acts 10:42: He commanded us to preach to the people and to testify that [Jesus] is the one whom God appointed as **judge of the living and the dead** (κριτῆς ζώντων καὶ νεκρῶν, kritēs zōntōn kai nekrōn).
 - i. 2 Tim 4:8: Now there is in store for me the crown of righteousness, which the Lord, **the righteous Judge**, will award to me on that day—and not only to me, but also to all who have longed for his appearing (ὁ δίκαιος κριτής, ho dikaios kritēs).
 - j. James 4:12: There is only one **Lawgiver and Judge**, the one who is able to save and destroy. But you—who are you to judge your neighbor (νομοθέτης, nomothetēs and κριτής, kritēs)?
 - k. James 5:9: Don’t grumble against each other, brothers, or you will be judged. **The Judge** is standing at the door (ὁ κριτής, ho kritēs)!
 - l. Rev 19:11: I saw heaven standing open and there before me was a white horse, whose rider is called **Faithful and True**. With justice he judges and makes war (πιστὸς, pistos and ἀληθινός, alēthinos).
7. Isaiah rebukes Israel, when they’re being attacked by Assyria, for relying on Egypt and her ways for help, rather than “The Holy One of Israel ... the LORD [who] longs to be gracious ... a God of justice.” (30:15-18) Isaiah also gives hope to all who would call out for help to their LORD, the “God of justice.” Those who do rely on their Judge will see the “voice of the LORD ... with his scepter” shatter Assyria (31). James 5:7-11 similarly admonishes the believer to stand firm, endure, and not grumble while waiting for the Judge to settle matters.
 8. Most of the OT prophetic books and many Psalms contain some type of lament to the LORD, the Judge; of particular note is Lamentations, which records a lament brought about by the destruction of Jerusalem and Temple by the Babylonians, who are depicted as the human agents of God’s discipline towards his people.
 - a. NIVSB Introduction: “In the middle of the book, the theology of Lamentations reaches its apex as it focuses on the goodness of God. He is the Lord of hope (3:21, 24-25), of love (3:22), of faithfulness (3:23), of salvation and restoration (3:26). In spite of all

evidence to the contrary, ‘his compassions never fail. / They are new every morning; / great is your faithfulness’ (3:22-23).”

- b. When it’s hard to “see God’s hand” in a situation, trust his heart and be at rest: he will cause all things to work together for good. (Tweeted 7-30-15; 4-29-16)
9. In the OT, *shophet* is typically used to refer to one who primarily by their actions leads, rules, or defends (cf. the book of Judges) but also, at times, to one that judges cases or situations, solely by their words and not by their actions. This latter sense is less common in the OT; in the NT, however, the LXX’s cognate Greek word for *shophet* is used primarily for someone who exercises judgment.
10. In Jer 5:28, Psalm 96:10-13, and elsewhere, *shophet* and *dyn* (דן) are used as parallel terms.
 - a. The verb *dyn* is used 23x in the OT and in Ps 96 with a meaning that this type of “judgment” results in bringing forth salvation, equity, reverence for God, jubilation, and worship.
 - b. Other helpful, explanatory examples of *dyn* are: Deut 32:3; Ps 135:14; Prov 31:9; Jer 5:26–28; 21:12; 22:11-17; 30:11-17. Psalms 7 and 18, in their entirety, are also noteworthy, in this regard.
11. A sample of scriptures that involve the word “arbitrator” (יָכַח; *ykhch*; to decide, reprove, arbitrate, argue, rebuke) are:
 - a. 2 Sam 7:14; Job 5:17; 22:4; Jer 2:19; Ps 6:2; 38:2; 50:8, 21; 141:5; Pro 3:11
 - b. Contextually they are read as follows: 2 Sam 7:14; Job 5:17; 9:33; 22:4-5; Ps 6:1-5; 38:1-4; 50:7-8; 13-14; 20-21; 94:10; 141:3-5; Pro 3:11-12; Isa 1:18; 11:1-4; Jer 2:19.
12. No doubt, there is no one innocent before God in all their ways. Though everyone chaffs at being judged unfairly, most don’t mind receiving just punishment. Every Christian should passionately hunger for justice in their lives and the lives of those around them – a justice that brings forth growth, while clinging to the mercy and grace provided through Jesus’ death and resurrection.
 - a. Typically, the term mercy is associated in the Bible with not getting the punishment we deserve, and the word grace with getting the favor we don’t deserve.

"There's a wideness in God's mercy, like the wideness of the sea.
There's a kindness in His justice, which is more than liberty.
For the love of God is broader than the measures of man's mind.
And the heart of the eternal is most wonderfully kind."

FW Faber

Father

אָב - Av

Found in the Song of Moses (Deut 32:6)²

They have acted corruptly toward him; to their shame they are no longer his children, but a warped and crooked generation. Is this the way you repay the LORD, O foolish and unwise people? Is he not

² אָב = AV; πατήρ.

your Father, your Creator, who made you and formed you? Remember the days of old; consider the generations long past. Ask your father and he will tell you, your elders, and they will explain to you. (Deut 32:5–7: the English phrase “your Father” represents the same Hebrew phrase in both verses)

1. OT imagery of God as “Father,” in comparison to the NT, is relatively rare; however, when used, it’s typically found in three contexts:
 - a. The LORD’s steadfast redemptive love.
 - b. The unfaithfulness of Israel, God’s firstborn.
 - c. The Son, the Messiah.
 - d. Cf. Ex 4:22-23; Deut 32:5-6; Ps 2:7-8; 68:5; 89:26-29; Isa 9:6; 63:15-17; 64:7-8; Jer 2:26-27, 29-30; 3:3-5, 19-20; Hos 11:1-2; Mal 2:10.
2. A principal characteristic of the LORD in the OT is that he is a father to the fatherless, a defender of widows and aliens – the very thing he asks of his people (Ps 68:5; Isa 1:17).
3. Related names:
 - a. Cf. Isa 9:6 (Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, **Everlasting Father**, Prince of Peace) in “Significant OT Messianic Names”; Everlasting Father: אָבִי עָדָם, אֲבִי־עָדָם.
 - b. Cf. Gal 4:6 (**Abba, Father**) in “Names of God Canonically Listed – NT.”

The Holy One of Israel

קְדוֹשׁ יִשְׂרָאֵל - *Qedosh Yisrael*

Isaiah prophesies against Sennacherib, king of Assyria.
His attack against Israel is really against the *Holy One of Israel* (2Ki 19:22).³

[Sennacherib], who is it you have insulted and blasphemed? Against whom have you raised your voice and lifted your eyes in pride? Against the *Holy One of Israel!*³⁵ That night the angel of the LORD went out and put to death a hundred and eighty-five thousand men in the Assyrian camp ... So Sennacherib ... returned to Nineveh and stayed there. One day, while he was worshiping in the temple of his god Nisroch, his sons Adrammelech and Sharezer cut him down with the sword. (2Ki 19:22, 35-37; cf. Isa 37)

1. Within the OT, God is often referred to as holy or the “Holy One”; however, the particular “the Holy One of Israel” (*Qedosh Yisrael*) is used only 31 times in OT; twenty-six of them are significantly found in Isaiah.
2. The “Holy One of Israel” and its related thoughts are one of the unifying themes between Isaiah 1-39, with its theme of judgment, and chapters 40-66, with its theme of comfort and redemption; it’s used 12 times in 1-39 and 14 times in 40-66 (cf. Isa 30:15; 31:1; 48:17; 47:4). The span of this name over the entire book of Isaiah should not surprise, as Isaiah’s call to ministry was anchored in holiness as is the message of the book. Luke, my son, writes: “The overwhelming pulse of Isaiah 6:1-7 is the revelation of God: the revelation that Israel lacked but that the entire world will one day know. This is a revelation that impacts the rest of Isaiah’s

³ *Qedosh Yisrael* = q^odôš yisrā’el = ke-THOSH yis-ra-EL = ὁ ἅγιος τοῦ Ἰσραὴλ = ho hagios tou Israēl. Cf. 1 Sam 6:20 (Holy God) in “The Primary Hebrew Names for God.”

ministry ... He saw something he could never get over. He saw God, whom you can never quite define and yet whom you can never stop talking about.” In this regards, we can say:

- a. God is altogether Other and transcendent; he’s the Holy One of Israel. He judges sin in a person’s life so that life-giving habits might come forth.
 - b. God is altogether Other and immanent; he’s the Holy One of Israel. He comforts and redeems and teaches and enables the repentant so that life-giving habits might come forth.
 - c. The bond our LORD desires with us is a love relationship: close, intimate, interactive, involved and life-changing.
3. LORD, your angels know and declare: “Holy, holy, holy is the LORD Almighty; the whole earth is full of his glory” (Isa 6:3). Help me to be like hearted. Like Isaiah, give me eyes that see but also clean lips, passion, and stamina to declare you as the “Holy One of Israel” and the Holy One of my life and my family and my church and ...
4. Isaiah’s Hebraic poetic beauty is unsurpassed in the OT and filled with hymns of praise and shouts of exaltation to Isaiah’s Holy God; Isa 12:1-6 is one of those songs, a hymn to the Holy One of Israel, which was to be sung “in that day.”
- a. In Isaiah, the phrase “in that day” is common (Isa 2:11, 17, 20; 3:7, 18; 4:1–2; 5:30; 7:18, 20–21, 23; 10:20, 27; 11:10–11; 12:1, 4; 17:4, 7, 9; 19:16, 18–19, 21, 23–24; 20:6; 22:8, 12, 20, 25; 23:15; 24:21; 25:9; 26:1; 27:1–2, 12–13; 28:5; 29:18; 30:23; 31:7). In the setting of Isa 12 this day stands for:
 - i. A day that began to dawn, when the Root of Jesse came up from the stump of Jesse (11:1).
 - ii. That day, when the “wolf will live with the lamb, the leopard will lie down with the goat” (11:6).
 - iii. That final day of shalom, when the “Root of Jesse will stand as a banner for the peoples; the nations will rally to him and his place of rest will be glorious” (11:10).
 - iv. That culminating day of salvation, when the believer fully realizes that “Surely God is my salvation; I will trust and not be afraid. The Lord, the Lord, is my strength and my song; he has become my salvation.” (12:2)

In that day you will say
“Give thanks to the LORD, call on his name ...
Sing to the LORD, for he has done glorious things ...
Shout aloud and sing for joy, people of Zion,
for great is the **Holy One of Israel** among you.”
Isa 12:4-6

Redeemer

גֹּאֵל - *Goel*

Job, who lost family and possessions, is exposed to death and the accusations of “friends.”
(Job 19:25)⁴

⁴ go^oel = go-EL; λυτρώω

I know that *my Redeemer* lives, and that in the end he will stand upon the earth. And after my skin has been destroyed, yet in my flesh I will see God; I myself will see him with my own eyes—I, and not another. How my heart yearns within me! Job 19:25–27

1. Depending on its context, *goel* is translated either as redeemer (Job 19:25), defender (Pro 23:11), or avenger (Num 35:12).
2. In the MT, only the verb by way of participles is used to create the noun redeemer; however, in the LXX both the verb (*lytroō*, λυτρόω) and noun (*lytron*, λύτρον) are used for such purposes.
3. The highest concentration of this word is found in Isaiah 40-63; note also the story of Ruth and her “kinsmen-redeemer,” Boaz (Ruth 3:9, 12; 4:14).
4. Isaiah 49 is a chapter about Israel’s restoration through the “servant of the LORD.” The LORD designates himself as the **Redeemer of Israel** (Isa 49:7; לִשְׁׁוֹׁתִי לְיִשְׂרָאֵל, *gōʾēl yiśrāʾēl*) and declares victory for the Messiah, “because of the LORD, who is faithful”:
 - Isa 49:1-7 is the second of the four servant songs (others classify the song between 1-6 or 1-13) where the servant, Israel (49:3), is also classified as the Messiah. Israel was to be a kingdom of priests (Ex 19:6); instead of unfaithful Israel, Jesus not only offers the sacrifice but is the sacrifice.
 - Isa 49:7: This is what the Lord says — the Redeemer and Holy One of Israel — to him who was despised and abhorred by the nation, to the servant of rulers: “Kings will see you and rise up, princes will see and bow down, because of the Lord, who is faithful, the Holy One of Israel, who has chosen you.”
 - Mark 10:42–45: Jesus called them together and said, “You know that those who are regarded as rulers of the Gentiles lord it over them, and their high officials exercise authority over them. Not so with you. Instead, whoever wants to become great among you must be your servant, and whoever wants to be first must be slave of all. For even the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give his life as a ransom (λύτρον, *lytron*) for many.” (Cf. Matt 20:26–28)
 - Will my life today be as unto service to others and as part of God’s redemption to others?
5. This name is used in parallel with many other names of God and frequently so in Isaiah, names and concepts that complement and flush out the idea of redemption are found in Deut 7:6–8; Job 19:25–27; Ps 19:14; 49:7–9, 15; 78:35; 107:1-3, 21, 43; 130:7–8; Isa 41:8–16; 44:6-8; 48:17-18; 54:5, 16-17; 59:20-21; 63:16; Jer 50:33–35; Titus 2:11–14.

Defend my cause and redeem me;
preserve my life according to your promise.
Ps 119:154

Wisdom

חֹכְמָה — *Chokhemah*

“I, *wisdom*, dwell together with prudence; I possess knowledge and discretion. (Prov 8:12)⁵

⁵ ḥāk^emāh; Cho-che-MAH; σοφία

Pro 8:1, 4–23, 34–36: Does not *wisdom* call out? Does not understanding raise her voice? ⁴To you, O people, I call out; I raise my voice to all mankind. You who are simple, gain prudence; you who are foolish, gain understanding. Listen, for I have worthy things to say; I open my lips to speak what is right. My mouth speaks what is true, for my lips detest wickedness. All the words of my mouth are just; none of them is crooked or perverse. To the discerning all of them are right; they are faultless to those who have knowledge. Choose my instruction instead of silver, knowledge rather than choice gold, for wisdom is more precious than rubies, and nothing you desire can compare with her. I, *wisdom*, dwell together with prudence; I possess knowledge and discretion. To fear the Lord is to hate evil; I hate pride and arrogance, evil behavior and perverse speech. Counsel and sound judgment are mine; I have understanding and power. By me kings reign and rulers make laws that are just; by me princes govern, and all nobles who rule on earth. I love those who love me, and those who seek me find me. With me are riches and honor, enduring wealth and prosperity. My fruit is better than fine gold; what I yield surpasses choice silver. I walk in the way of righteousness, along the paths of justice, bestowing wealth on those who love me and making their treasuries full. The Lord brought me forth as the first of his works, before his deeds of old; I was appointed from eternity, from the beginning, before the world began. ³⁴ Blessed is the man who listens to me, watching daily at my doors, waiting at my doorway. For whoever finds me finds life and receives favor from the Lord. But whoever fails to find me harms himself; all who hate me love death.

1. We preached Christ crucified ... to those whom God has called, both Jews and Greeks, Christ the power of God and the **wisdom of God**. (1 Cor 1:23-24)
2. To the **only wise God** be glory forever through Jesus Christ! Amen. (Rom 16:27)
3. Wisdom is personified in Proverbs in the following verses: 1:20-33; 3:13-18; 8:1, 12-21; 9:1-12.
4. Pro 8:22-31 depicts wisdom as an embodied attribute of God that was and is involved with him in creation. Similarly, Pro 1:20-24 depicts people rejecting God's personified wisdom much like Israel rejected God's spoken word, when it was uttered by either God's prophets (Isa 1:4; 5:24) or Jesus (Matt 23:37). Though all these above verses should not be read as an explicit description of Christ, they do however provide part of the background for the NT portrayal of Christ as the God's personified wisdom. In the NT Christ is described as the very embodiment and supreme manifestation of God's wisdom: John 1:1-14; 1Co 1:24; Col 1:15-17; 2:3; Heb 1:1-4.
5. In the Apocrypha's book The Wisdom of Solomon, wisdom is depicted as a "spotless mirror of the working of God, and an image of his goodness." This concept, but also several of the LXX's words used in Wisdom 7:24-26, is found in Heb 1:1-4 to depict Jesus who is "the radiance of God's glory and the exact representation of his being, sustaining all things by his powerful word."⁶
6. Other scriptures on wisdom and God: Job 12:13-16; 38:1-5; 42:1-6; Pro 1:20; 2:6-7, 12; 4:7; 8:12-21; 9:1-6; 10:13; 14:33; 19:20; 24:7; Eccl 7:11–12, 19; 8:1; 9:16, 18; Isa 11:1-5; 33:6; 40:13-14, 27-31; Rom 11:33-36; 1 Cor 1:30; James 1:5–8, 16–18.

⁶ Wis 7:24–30: For wisdom is more mobile than any motion; because of her pureness she pervades and penetrates all things. For she is a breath of the power of God, and a pure emanation of the glory of the Almighty; therefore nothing defiled gains entrance into her. For she is a reflection of eternal light, a spotless mirror of the working of God, and an image of his goodness. Although she is but one, she can do all things, and while remaining in herself, she renews all things; in every generation she passes into holy souls and makes them friends of God, and prophets; for God loves nothing so much as the person who lives with wisdom. She is more beautiful than the sun, and excels every constellation of the stars. Compared with the light she is found to be superior, for it is succeeded by the night, but against wisdom evil does not prevail.

O Upright One

יָשָׁר – *Yashar*

Found within a song of praise that will be sung in the land of Judah “in that day.” (Isa 26:7)⁷

Isa 26:3, 7–9, 12-13: You will keep in perfect peace (שְׁלוֹמִים) him whose mind is steadfast, because he trusts in you. Trust in the LORD forever, for the LORD, the LORD, is the Rock eternal. ⁷ The path of the righteous (צְדִיק) is level; *O upright One* (יָשָׁר), you make the way of the righteous (צְדִיק) smooth. Yes, LORD, walking in the way of your laws, we wait for you; your name and renown are the desire of our hearts. My soul yearns for you in the night; in the morning my spirit longs for you. When your judgments come upon the earth, the people of the world learn righteousness (צְדָקָה) ... ¹² LORD, you establish peace (שְׁלוֹמִים) for us; all that we have accomplished (בְּעֲשָׂה) you have done (פָּעַל) for us. O LORD, our God, other lords besides you have ruled over us, but your name alone do we honor.

1. *Yashar* is found 119 times in the MT; it’s used primarily to describe:
 - a. God’s ways and words.
 - b. Either leaders or people groups; it’s used here typically in parallel with either the word “righteous” or “good.”
2. *Yashar* is used prolifically in the OT, as it is in Isa 26: we are God’s workmanship; as we yield to his hand and trust him, the Upright One will make our lives upright, level, righteous ... and good. Like producing like; God’s love efficaciously changing darkness to light. Us hungering for intimacy and communion with God more than seeking to perform or be perfect; outward performance flowing from inward change; God’s love working, molding ... and being perfected in us until that Day. For example, Pro 3:5-6: Trust in the Lord ... he will make your paths straight (יָשָׁר).” Cf. also Ps 25:8; 92:12-15; 119:137.

He is the Rock, his works are perfect, and all his ways are just. A faithful God who does no wrong, upright (צְדִיק) and just (יָשָׁר) is he. (Deut 32:4)

Creator

בּוֹרֵא – *Bore*

“The LORD is the everlasting God, the *Creator* of the ends of the earth” (Isa 40:28).⁸

⁷ yāšār; ya-SHAR; εὐθύς

⁸ Bo-REE; bōrē; ὁ κατασκευάσας; the Greek verb (κατασκευάζω), formed here into a participle, is used only one time in the LXX as a name for God. When the English noun “creator” is found in our Bibles, the MT and LXX typically use the respective verbs בּוֹרֵא and κτίζω to make participles that function as nouns.

Do you not know? Have you not heard? The LORD is the everlasting God, the *Creator* of the ends of the earth. He will not grow tired or weary, and his understanding no one can fathom. Isa 40:28

1. The opening thoughts of the Bible and the opening sentence of the Apostle and Nicene Creeds establish God as creator and highlight this doctrine as our deepest and most foundational relation to **God—He is Creator and sustainer of his creation, and therefore God, worthy of our allegiance and worship.**
2. God creates many ways and at times, even out of nothing (*creatio ex nihilo*; Rom 4:17; cf., Heb 11:3; 2 Cor 4:6; Ps 33:6; 148:5; John 1:3).
 - a. “The root **סָרַף** has the basic meaning ‘to create.’ It differs from **יָצַר** ‘to fashion’ in that the latter primarily emphasizes the shaping of an object while **סָרַף** emphasizes the initiation of the object ... The word is used in the Qal only of God’s activity and is thus a purely theological term. ... The root **סָרַף** denotes the concept of ‘initiating something new’ in a number of passages ... The word also possesses the meaning of ‘bringing into existence’ ... It is not surprising that this word with its distinctive emphases is used most frequently to describe the creation of the universe and the natural phenomena ... The usages of the term in this sense present a clearly defined theology. The magnitude of God’s power is exemplified in creation. This has implications for the weak (Isa 40:26; cf. 40:27–31) and for the unfolding of God’s purposes in history (42:5; 45:12). Creation displays the majesty (Amos 4:13), orderliness (Isa 45:18), and sovereignty (Ps 89:12) of God ... Since the word never occurs with the object of the material, and since the primary emphasis of the word is on the newness of the created object, the word lends itself well to the concept of creation *ex nihilo*, although that concept is not necessarily inherent within the meaning of the word.” (TWOT)
3. The many scriptures that support the doctrine of creation (e.g., Gen 1-3; Job 38-42; Psalms 8, 19, 95-100, 148; Pro 8:22-36; Isa 40:9-31; 42:5-9; John 1:1-3, 10; Rom 1:25; 11:33-36; 1 Cor 8:6; 11:12; 2 Cor 4:6; Col 1:15-20; Heb 1:1-14; 11:3) make this teaching far from being primarily abstract or academic. Further these references are way more than about science, history or about a theory of creation. These scriptures foremost represent a central, biblical truth that makes much of Creator God, who is worthy of worship, enjoyment, relationship, and trust. Why? What he creates is good, because he is good. As such these scriptures:
 - a. Testify to God’s love, majesty, incomparability, and might but also to the fact that there is no ultimate reality other than in Israel’s *Elohim*.
 - b. Declare that God is glorified in and through heaven, earth, creatures, humanity, etc., and he gives these entities their proper purpose and value.
 - c. Call people to holiness through the worship of the Creator and a relationship with him.
 - d. Give encouragement and comfort to the weak and demand humility from the proud.
 - e. Remind us that our lives come to us from God, with order and seasons, that “God creates by Word,” and that goodness depends on God’s graciousness and power.
4. Psa 104 calls the worshiper to meditate on God’s works and praise the Creator of earth and sky, man and beast: all his creation. He gives to them foundation, unction, provision, delight ... and boundaries to be obeyed, for their own well being and for his purposes to unfold: “He makes winds his messengers ... he set the earth on its foundation ... at your rebuke the waters fled ... you set a boundary they cannot cross ... he makes springs pour water into the ravines ... he waters the mountains ... the earth is satisfied by the fruit of his work.” (Ps 104:4-10) “How many are your works, O LORD! In wisdom you made them all ... May the glory of the LORD endure forever; may the LORD rejoice in his works ... I will sing to the LORD all my life ... may my meditation be pleasing to him, as I rejoice in the LORD.” (24-34)
5. In the end, God’s purpose for creation will prevail, evil will not triumph, and once again creation will be in harmony with each other – the lion will lay down with the lamb.

6. Cf. Deut 32:6; Eccl 12:1; Isa 27:11; 40:28; 43:15; 54:16–17; 57:14–19; Matt 19:4-6; Rom 1:25; Col 3:9-10; 1 Pe 4:19.
7. Related Names:
 - a. Gen 14:19-23: **Possessor of Heaven and Earth.**
 - b. Ps 121:2: My help comes from the LORD, the **Maker of heaven and earth**; cf. Ps 115:15; 124:8; 134:3; 146:6
 - c. Isa 43:15: **Creator of Israel**; cf. Ps 100:3; Eccl 12:1.
 - d. Isa 45:18: **Former of the Earth.**
 - e. Jon 1:9: **God of Heaven Who Made the Sea and the Dry Land.**
 - f. Rev 3:14: **Jesus, The ruler of God’s creation.**
 - g. Gen 1:1 (God) in “Primary Hebrew Names for God.”
8. The primary creation psalms are Psalms 8, 19, 33, 104, and 145.
9. “I believe in Jesus Christ, God’s Son our Lord, in order to perceive and to understand that God the Almighty, the Father, is the Creator of heaven and earth. If I did not believe the former, I could not perceive and understand the latter.” (Karl Barth)

Know that the Lord is God.
 It is he who made (עָשָׂה) us, and we are his; we are his people, the sheep of his pasture.
 The Lord will fulfill [his purpose] for me;
 your love, O Lord, endures forever—do not abandon the works (עֲשֵׂה) of your hands.
 (Ps 100:3; 138:8)

The One Who Comforts

מְנַחֵם – *Menachem*

“I, even I, am *he who comforts you*” (Isa 51:12).⁹

The ransomed of the LORD will return. They will enter Zion with singing; everlasting joy will crown their heads. Gladness and joy will overtake them, and sorrow and sighing will flee away. I, even I, am *he who comforts you*. Who are you that you fear mortal men, the sons of men, who are but grass, that you forget the LORD your Maker, who stretched out the heavens and laid the foundations of the earth, that you live in constant terror every day because of the wrath of the oppressor, who is bent on destruction?
 Isa 51:11-13

1. The verb used in Isa 51:12 and translated as “comfort” typically means:
 - a. As a Niphal verb – to be sorry, repent, regret, console oneself.
 - b. As a Piel verb – to comfort, console another, encourage, give hope, have compassion.
2. The LXX uses three words to translate the root word *nacham*, a verb and two cognate nouns:
 - a. *Parakaleo*, παρακαλέω, which means:
 - i. Call to one’s side, summon, invite.
 - ii. Appeal to, urge, exhort.

⁹ מְנַחֵם; nāḥam = na-CHAM; ὁ παρακαλῶν. In Isa 51:12, the verb *nacham* is found in the form of a piel participle form.

- iii. Request, implore, appeal to entreat
 - iv. Comfort, encourage, cheer up.
 - b. *Parakletos* (παράκλητος, m.n.): comforter, counselor, helper, advocate, mediator.
 - c. *Parakelsis* (παράκλησις, f.n.): comfort, encouragement, consolation, appeal.
3. *Nacham* is significantly used for the first time in the OT, when Noah was named by Lamech, his father, and then in a similar way in Isa 61:1-2 (Luke 4:14-21) to proclaim another epoch that would be ushered in by the Messiah:
- a. “He named him Noah (נֹחַ, nōah) and said, ‘He will comfort us in the labor and painful toil of our hands caused by the ground the LORD has cursed.’” Gen 5:29
4. Related scriptures to the above Hebrew and Greek words: Ruth 2:11-14; Ps 23:4; 86:17; 119:52, 82; Isa 12:1-6; 51:11-13; 61:1-2; 66:9-13; Jer 31:13; Hos 11:8; 13:14; Luke 2:25, 28-32; John 14:26; 16:7-13; Rom 15:4-5; 2 Co 1:3-4; 2 Th 2:16-17; 1 Jo 2:1-2.
- a. In the NT, God, Jesus, and the Holy Spirit are all identified with either παράκλητος or παράκλησις (John 16:7; Rom 15:5; 1 John 2:1); i.e., each person of the Trinity shares a part in the process of “comforting” the believer.
 - b. In Rom 15:4-5, both God and the Scriptures are the source of endurance (ὕπομονή) and encouragement (παράκλησις), perhaps because “all Scripture [is] God-breathed” (2 Ti 3:16; *πᾶσα γραφὴ θεόπνευστος*).
- c. Jesus’ ministry is identified by compassion: Matt 9:36; 14:14; 15:32; 20:34; Mark 1:41; 6:34; 8:2; Luke 15:20.

May your unfailing love be my comfort, according to your promise to your servant.
Ps 119:76

Praise be to the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ,
the Father of compassion and the God of all comfort, who comforts us in all our troubles,
so that we can comfort those in any trouble with the comfort we ourselves have received from God.
2 Cor 1:3–4

Hope of Israel

מִקְוֵה יִשְׂרָאֵל – *Miqweh Yisrael*

Jeremiah prophecies about Jerusalem’s certain fall (Jer 17:13).¹⁰

O LORD, the *hope of Israel*, all who forsake you will be put to shame. Those who turn away from you will be written in the dust because they have forsaken the LORD, the spring of living water. Heal me, O LORD, and I will be healed; save me and I will be saved, for you are the one I praise. Jer 17:13–14; cf. 14:8-9

1. Though putting one’s hope in God is a prevalent scriptural concept, this name for God is not; it’s used only in Jer 14:8 and 17:13. For related thoughts, see Ps 25:1-5; 33:18; 52:8-9; 62:5-8; 71:5; 14-15; 119:43, 81; Isa 40:31; Jer 14:22; 50:7; Luke 2:25; Acts 26:6; 28:20; 1 Tim 1:1.
2. In a Biblical context, hope does not mean something wished for; e.g., “I hope it does not rain.” This latter type of hope involves risk and a feeling that is not sure. A biblical hope is sure; it’s

¹⁰ miqwêh yisrā’el = Mik-WEH yis-ra-EL; ὑπομονὴ Ἰσραηλ

the anticipation of the future, as the fulfillment of God's promises; such hope is based on God's faithfulness. Here, though the fulfillment of the thing hoped is certain, the details of that which is hoped for is not always certain: the time when the promise will be fulfilled and how things will exactly unfold or look is uncertain but that God will be true to his word is certain.

3. In the context of Jer 14:8 and 17:13, the concepts of what is reality and what is ideal are contrasted: the current relationship between Jerusalem and the Lord is juxtaposed with what should be. Because the LORD is not their hope, the spring of living waters from which they were supposed to drink, judgment is now unavoidable; yet in judgment, the LORD, the Hope of Israel, plants a seed of hope in their hearts: now the LORD will be known not only as one who rescued his people from Egypt but also from the "land of the north and out of all the countries where he had banished them. For I will restore them to the land I gave their forefathers" (16:15).
4. Psa 52 contrasts David, who fled from Saul to Ahimelech, with Doeg, who went to Saul and told him where David had gone. David prays in verse seven for Doeg's everlasting ruin, "who did not make God his stronghold but trusted in his great wealth and grew strong by destroying others!" and declares in verse nine: "I will praise you forever for what you have done; in your name I will hope, for your name is good. I will praise you in the presence of your saints." Because he is one who puts his "trust in God's unfailing love for ever and ever," he is "like an olive tree flourishing in the house of God" (v 8).
 - a. The LORD, who is the Hope of Israel, can also be the hope of our lives, because he has proven himself worthy of such hope. When our hope is built on God's name and his promises – who he is and what he has said (Ps 138:1-3) – our hearts can be "bold and stouthearted."
 - b. WBC comment on Ps 138:1-3: "In the temple forecourt a worshiper utters his song of thanksgiving. His face is turned toward the main building, the place of Yahweh's gracious presence (cf. 1 Kgs 8:29). He sings with enthusiasm: his personal experience constitutes for him proof positive of the reality and power of Israel's God and so a defiant challenge to all rival claims of deity. In tones of praise he theologizes from his experience. He has seen at work in his own life Yahweh's national attributes of covenant love and faithfulness (cf. Exod 34:6). It has been his privilege to witness the supreme validity of God's self-revelation and promises. Then in simpler vein the psalmist gives the reason for his thanksgiving: answered prayer and restored vitality and morale."
5. Paul uses this phrase – "the hope of Israel" – to refer to the hope Israel had of their forthcoming messiah (Acts 28:20; 26:6).
6. Related names:
 - a. May the **God of hope** fill you with all joy and peace as you trust in him, so that you may overflow with hope by the power of the Holy Spirit. (Rom 15:13)

O Israel, put your hope in the LORD,
for with the LORD is unfailing love and with him is full redemption.
Ps 130:7

But as for me, I will always have hope;
I will praise you more and more.
My mouth will tell of your righteousness, of your salvation all day long,
though I know not its measure.
Ps 71:14–15

Husband

ישׁ – *Ish*

Prior to Israel's fall, Hosea declares the LORD's unfailing heart of covenantal love to an unfaithful nation; God also tells him to marry an adulteress (Hos 2:16).¹¹

In that day,¹² declares the Lord, you will call me my *husband* ... I will betroth you to me ... in righteousness and justice, in love and compassion. I will betroth you in faithfulness, and you will acknowledge the LORD (Hos 2:16, 19-20).

1. John 14:1–3: Do not let your hearts be troubled. Trust in God; trust also in me. In my Father's house are many rooms; if it were not so, I would have told you. I am going there to prepare a place for you. And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come back and take you to be with me that you also may be where I am.
 - a. Parents arranged the typical first century Palestinian wedding; it was preceded by a betrothal period of at least a year that was binding and only broken by death or divorce. For most of these arranged marriages, a "bride's price" was paid to the bride's family and each fiancé would live during the engagement period in their parent's home. During the betrothal period, the future husband would arrange a place for his bride, which could be as simple as a room in his father's house, an attached home to it, or one that was in close proximity to the groom's father's house. When that special wedding day arrived and all the preparations were done, the groom and his friends would come with much pageantry to the waiting bride and her attendants. The actual wedding ceremony was very simple and short; however, the wedding processional and the post wedding festivities were extensive and lengthy, with the celebration often lasting from one to two weeks.
 - b. Cf. Isa 54:5; 62:5; Matt 9:14-17; 25:1-13; Eph 5:25-32; James 4:1-10; Rev 19:6–9; 21:1–10.

¹¹ יֵשׁ = EESH; ἄνθρωπος

¹² When Israel, after being exiled for their sins, spiritually awakens; cf. 2:7b; Ps 119:71.

Names of God Canonically Listed – OT

He Who Forms the Hearts of All Who Considers Everything They Do

Ps 33:13-19: From heaven the LORD looks down and sees all mankind ... ¹⁵ *He who forms the hearts of all, who considers everything they do ...* ¹⁷ A horse is a vain hope for deliverance; despite all its great strength it cannot save. ¹⁸ But the eyes of the LORD are on those who fear him on those who hope in his unfailing love, ¹⁹ to deliver them from death and keep them alive in famine.

1. The fact that God sees all and knows all is well supported in Scripture; e.g. 1 Sam 16:7; 1 Kings 8:39; 1 Chron 28:9; Ps 7:9; 26:2; 139:1–2, 15-18, 23-24; Pro 15:11; 17:3; 21:2; Jer 11:20; 17:10; 20:12; Matt 6:3-4; Luke 16:15; Acts 1:24; 15:8; Rom 8:27; 1 Thes 2:4; Rev 2:23.
2. Other related names:
 - a. Acts 1:24-25: Then [the disciples] prayed, “Lord, you know everyone’s heart. Show us which of these two you have chosen to take over this apostolic ministry, which Judas left to go where he belongs.”
 - i. Here and in Acts 15:8, the disciples call God the **heart-knower** or heart-searcher (kardiognōsta, vocative singular). This name is only used in the NT in Acts 1:24 and 15:8, but it is a title as its found in the vocative case. Each time Luke uses this name for God it’s when he is making a sovereign choice: Matthias replacing Judas; Cornelius’ household being the first Gentile recipients of the Holy Spirit. “Heart-knower,” however, was a favorite expression for God by post-apostolic Christianity. (LK)
 - b. Rev 2:23: I will strike [Jezebel’s] children dead. Then all the churches will know that I am **he who searches hearts and minds**, and I will repay each of you according to your deeds. [Jezebel called herself a prophetess but led God’s people into sexual immorality and food sacrificed to idols.]

God, My Joy and My Delight

Ps 43:3–5: Send forth your light and your truth, let them guide me; let them bring me to your holy mountain, to the place where you dwell. Then will I go to the altar of God, to God, *my joy* and *my delight*. I will praise you with the harp, O God, my God. Why are you downcast, O my soul? Why so disturbed within me? Put your hope in God, for I will yet praise him, my Savior and my God.

1. The introspection of Ps 42 – 43 only yields despair until it turns to prayer and allows hope in God to be the eternal Rock upon which the psalmist stands and sinks no further. Here, God’s light and truth are personified messengers (43:3) that will guide the hopeless back into God’s presence.
2. Similarly, in a “dry and weary land” the Psalmist declares: “Because your love is better than life, my lips will glorify you ... My soul will be satisfied as with the richest of foods.” (Ps 63:3, 5)
3. Are you given to despair, the complete loss or absence of hope?

O My Strength

Ps 59:9-10a, 16-17: *O my Strength* (יְשׁוּעָה, *ʾez*), I watch for you; you, O God, are my fortress, my loving God. God will go before me ... I will sing of your strength, in the morning I will sing of your love; for you are my fortress, my refuge in times of trouble. *O my Strength*, I sing praise to you; you, O God, are my fortress, my loving God.

1. Related names:
 - a. Ps 24:7-8: Lift up your heads, O you gates; be lifted up, you ancient doors, that the *King of glory* may come in. Who is this *King of glory*? The **LORD strong and mighty**, the **LORD mighty in battle**.
 - b. 43:1-2, 5: Vindicate me, O God, and plead my cause against an ungodly nation; rescue me from deceitful and wicked men. You are **God my stronghold** (מַצְעָדַי, mā'ûz). Why have you rejected me? Why must I go about mourning, oppressed by the enemy? Why are you downcast, O my soul? Why so disturbed within me? Put your hope in God, for I will yet praise him, my Savior and my God.
 - i. For other references related to this Hebrew word see 2 Sam 22:33; Isa 17:9–10; 23:14; 27:5; Jer 16:19; Ezek 24:25; Ps 31:4; 37:39; 43:2; 52:7; Dan 11:10; Neh 8:10.
 - c. The Hebrew phrase ׁל ׁלֹהִים יְהוָה is only repeated twice in the Bible: Josh 22:22; Psa 50:1. Many translators (NIV, ESV, NRS, NLT NKJ against NJB, NET, CEB, HCB) see the two words ׁל ׁלֹהִים acting as a superlative in combination with yhwh and therefore translate the entire phrase ׁל ׁלֹהִים יְהוָה (אֱלֹהִים אֱלֹהִים יְהוָה) as “**The Mighty One, God, the LORD!**” CEB: “God, the LORD God.”
2. Cf. 2 Sam. 22:33; 2 Chr 20:6, 12; Ps 28:7; 43:2; 52:7; 68:28, 32–35; 118:14; Isa 17:10-11; 2 Cor 12:9-10.
3. The Israelites who died in the desert missed God’s perfect will for them. Why? They didn’t believe God had spoken to them, that he was able to bring them into the land he had promised them (Heb 3:17-19). This is not the attitude depicted in Ps 43: when the psalmist is in a desperate condition, he puts his hope in God; nor was it David’s perspective in Ps 59, when he was trapped in his house by Saul’s men, who were there to kill him; nor was it Joshua and Caleb’s, when asked to enter Canaan; nor for those found in Heb 11. What’s the condition of my heart, today? Fear or faith? Looking towards my supposed immortality and strength or aware of my frailties and God’s greatness?

You Who Hear Prayer

Ps 65:2: *O you who hear prayer*, to you all men will come.

1. To pray in the LORD’s name is to pray with God’s character, authority, power, and objectives in mind.
2. In the verses that follow we find two great promises concerning the God who hears prayer and to the Ephesians a great Trinitarian expression about prayer: John 14:12-13; 1 John 5:14-15; Eph 2:18.
3. Efficacious prayer: God talking to God; the Spirit of the Son, within us, talking to the Father, through us; us refreshed, changed by divine dialogue. (Tweeted 2015)

The One to Be Feared

Ps 76:6-7, 11: At your rebuke, O God of Jacob, both horse and chariot lie still. You alone are to be feared. Who can stand before you when you are angry? ¹¹ Make vows to the LORD your God and fulfill them; let all the neighboring lands bring gifts to the *one to be feared*.

1. Ps 34 is a Hebraic acrostic psalm: each verse successively beginning with the next letter of the Hebrew alphabet. It’s title (34:1 in the MT) and concluding verse (22) act as an inclusio, bracketing the content of the poem and pointing the readers to its key, center verse (11): “Come, my children, listen to me; I will teach you the fear of the LORD.”
 - a. The psalm typifies David’s life, whom the LORD redeemed and did not condemn, because David took refuge in the LORD; David’s psalm to the LORD and those that will hear promises similar blessings to what he experienced to anyone who would fear the LORD.
 - b. The thoughts of Ps 34:12–16, which unpack what it means to fear the LORD, are quoted by 1 Pe 3:8-12 and put them in the context of suffering for doing good, living in harmony, not repaying evil with evil ... “so that you may inherit a blessing.”
 - c. When we fear the LORD (11), we are delivered from all our other fears (4).
2. Luke 12:4–7: “I tell you, my friends, do not be afraid of those who kill the body and after that can do no more. But I will show you whom you should fear: Fear him who, after the killing of the body, has power to throw you into hell. Yes, I tell you, fear him. Are not five sparrows sold for two pennies? Yet not one of them is forgotten by God. Indeed, the very hairs of your head are all numbered. Don’t be afraid; you are worth more than many sparrows.

3. Ps 56:3–4: When I am afraid, I will trust in you. In God, whose word I praise, in God I trust; I will not be afraid. What can mortal man do to me? ^{12b} I will present my thank offerings to you. For you have delivered me from death and my feet from stumbling, that I may walk before God in the light of life.
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One Who Gives Victory

Ps 144:1–2, 9–10: Praise be to the LORD my Rock, who trains my hands for war, my fingers for battle. He is my loving God and my fortress, my stronghold and my deliverer, my shield, in whom I take refuge, who subdues peoples under me. I will sing a new song to you, O God; on the ten-stringed lyre I will make music to you, to the *One who gives victory* to kings, who delivers his servant David from the deadly sword.

- Ps 18:46-50; 108:12–13; Pro 2:1–11; Rom 8:35–39; 1 Cor 15:55–58; 2 Cor 2:13–16; 1 John 3:7–10
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Glorious Crown

Isa 28:1-6: Woe to that wreath the pride of Ephraim’s drunkards, to the fading flower, his glorious beauty ... ² See, the Lord has one who is powerful and strong. Like a ... destructive wind ... he will throw it forcefully to the ground. ... ³ That wreath [Samaria], the pride of Ephraim’s drunkards, will be trampled underfoot. ⁴ That fading flower, his glorious beauty, set on the head of a fertile valley, will be like a fig ripe before harvest—as soon as someone sees it and takes it in his hand, he swallows it. ⁵ In that day the LORD Almighty will be a *Glorious Crown*, a beautiful wreath for the remnant of his people. ⁶ He will be a spirit of justice to him who sits in judgment, a source of strength to those who turn back the battle at the gate.

1. Isa 28 is the first of six prophetic judgments found in chapters 28-34: five to unfaithful Israel, one to the world.
 - a. God will destroy all “beauty” that has its own source (23:9; 28:1–4) but will again be a crown of beauty to his remnant (28:5).
 - b. Samaria, with its “natural” beauty, strength and fertility, was once “beautiful and glorious” but soon God alone, not Israel, will be the remnant’s beauty and “glory” (כְּבוֹד).
 - c. Note the following:
 - i. “In that day” is a common expression in the OT (73x), but especially so in Isaiah (43x), that often refers to a visitation from God.
 - ii. NIVSB: “The region in central W Palestine that fell to Ephraim is mainly relatively high hill-country with better rainfall than Judaea and some good soils; hence some biblical references to the fruitfulness of the Ephraim district.” It was a glorious region.
 - iii. The word translated “glorious” in verses 1, 4, and 5 sounds like the word for “almighty” in 5; i.e., “glory/tsve = כְּבוֹד as compared to “almighty”/tsva = אֱלֹהִים. Is Isaiah making a word play, by using the word *tsve* for glory instead of *kavod*?
 - iv. “Wreath” of verses 1 and 3 are a reference to Samaria, the capital of the Northern Kingdom, Israel; in verse 5 this same word refers to the LORD Almighty that Glorious Crown.
 - v. The word translated “glorious” (כְּבוֹד) and applied to God in verse 5 is certainly tied conceptually to verses 1 and 4, which use the same word to reference Samaria/Israel as a fading flower. That is to say, “God will destroy Samaria, which people were taking pride in instead of looking to the LORD Almighty; he will do this in hopes of becoming to the remnant their glorious crown, their wreath, and glorious flower that does not fade.”
 2. Jeremiah 9 & 17 contrast those who rely on God or themselves and outlines the consequences for the latter: 9:7, 12-16, 23-26; 17:3-14
 3. For related scriptures to the above name, see Deut 10:20-21; Isa 61:1-3; 65:16; 1 Cor 1:28-30; Gal 6:14; Rev 3:14; Gen 18:25 (Judge) in “Other Hebrew Names of God.”
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Potter

Isa 64:1-8: ¹ Oh, that you would rend the heavens and come down ... ² to make your name known ... ⁶ all of us have become like one who is unclean, and all our righteous acts are like filthy rags ... ⁷ no one calls on your name or strives to take hold of you ... ⁸ Yet, O LORD, you are our Father. We are the clay, you are the *Potter*; we are all the work of your hand. ... ⁹ Oh, look upon us, we pray, for we are your people.

1. LORD, I confess you as my Father and my Potter – Creator and Maker, giver of life and shaper of it. Even if, like Paul, I run my race well, I know I don't it run flawlessly. From imperfection you bring perfection, from death you bring life. I praise the Lamb, whose atonement “justifies many,” whose “intercession for the transgressors” keeps us on our feet moving forward (53:11-12), whose victory has delivered me from death and the bondage of sin; you, O LORD, take the dropped stitches and missed brush strokes contained within my most important works and the flawed, earthly efforts embedded within my best attempts and do your perfect work!
2. Cf. Isa 29:13-16; Jer 18:1-10; John 15:1-4; Rom 9:19-24; 2 Ti 2:15, 20-21; 3:16-17; Heb 2:10-18; Jude 24-25 and Ps 95:6 (*The LORD our Maker*) in “Hebrew Names with LORD.”

Spring of Living Water

Jer 2:5, 11-13: ⁵ This is what the Lord says: “What fault did your fathers find in me, that they strayed so far from me? They followed worthless idols and became worthless themselves. ¹¹ Has a nation ever changed its gods? (Yet they are not gods at all.) But my people have exchanged their Glory (כְּבוֹד, *kavod*) for worthless idols. ¹² Be appalled at this, O heavens, and shudder with great horror,” declares the LORD. ¹³ My people have committed two sins: They have forsaken me, *the spring of living water*, and have dug their own cisterns, broken cisterns that cannot hold water.

1. Cf. Jer 17:13-16 and Deut 5:26 (*Living God*) in “Names of God Canonically Listed – OT”
2. **Living waters for believers:** Ps 36:7-9; Isa 55:1-2, 6; Zech 14:7-8; John 4:10-14; 7:37-39; Rev 7:13-17; 21:6-8
3. **A living way for believers:** Acts 17:24-28; Heb 10:19-22.

No One Is Like You

Jer 10:6-16: *No One Is Like You*, O LORD; you are great, and your name is mighty in power. Who should not revere you, O King of the nations? This is your due. Among all the wise men of the nations and in all their kingdoms, there is *no one like you*. They are all senseless and foolish; they are taught by worthless wooden idols. Hammered silver is brought from Tarshish and gold from Uphaz. What the craftsman and goldsmith have made is then dressed in blue and purple—all made by skilled workers. But the LORD is the true God; he is the living God, the eternal King. When he is angry, the earth trembles; the nations cannot endure his wrath. Tell them this: “These gods, who did not make the heavens and the earth, will perish from the earth and from under the heavens.” But God made the earth by his power; he founded the world by his wisdom and stretched out the heavens by his understanding. When he thunders, the waters in the heavens roar; he makes clouds rise from the ends of the earth. He sends lightning with the rain and brings out the wind from his storehouses. Everyone is senseless and without knowledge; every goldsmith is shamed by his idols. His images are a fraud; they have no breath in them. They are worthless, the objects of mockery; when their judgment comes, they will perish. ¹⁶ He who is the Portion of Jacob is not like these, for he is the Maker of all things, including Israel, the tribe of his inheritance—the LORD Almighty is his name.

1. The thoughts of Jer 10:10-16 are echoed in Jer 51:15-19 and 10:16 is quoted verbatim in Jer 51:19. Interestingly, Jer 10 is a prophecy of judgment against Judah and her idols and Jer 51 is a prophecy against Babylon and her idols. These two chapters, seen in unison, seem to say, “God is The King of nations, whether Judah or Babylon; no idol, whether found throughout Israel or fully embraced within Babylon, is comparable to the LORD. God does not, will not, and has not tolerated idolatry, regardless of who does it. For nothing and no one can compare to the LORD.”
2. Karl Barth is noted as describing God as “Other” and tying such thoughts to his holiness.
3. Cf. Exo 20:5 (*A Jealous God*) in “Hebrew Names with God” and “LORD – The Incomparability of YHWH, the Shema, and the Trinity” found in the Appendix.

Portion of Jacob

Jer 10:16: He who is the *Portion of Jacob* is not like these [idols], for he is the Maker of all things, including Israel, the tribe of his inheritance—the LORD Almighty is his name.

1. For the context of Jer 10:16, see previous entry.
2. Though the title *Portion of Jacob* is used only in Jer 10:16 and 51:19, its concept is not foreign to the Bible (*Portion of Jacob*: חֵלֶק יַעֲקֹב, *hēleq ya‘qōb*; the LXX translates “portion” as μέρος [*meros*] and 10:16b’s “inheritance” as κληρονομία, *klēronomia*.)
 - a. Num 18:20: And the LORD said to Aaron, “You shall have no inheritance (נַחֲלָה, *nah‘lāh*, which is the same word used for inheritance in Jer 10:16) in their land, neither shall you have any portion (חֵלֶק, *hēleq*) among them. I am your portion and your inheritance among the people of Israel.
 - b. Ps 73:25-26: Whom have I in heaven but you? And earth has nothing I desire besides you. My flesh and my heart may fail, but God is the strength of my heart and my portion (חֵלֶק) forever. Ps 119:57: You are my portion (חֵלֶק), O LORD; I have promised to obey your words. 142:5: I cry to you, O LORD; I say, “You are my refuge, my portion (חֵלֶק) in the land of the living.” Lam 3:24: I say to myself, “The LORD is my portion (חֵלֶק); therefore I will wait for him.” (Words that were spoken possibly as Jerusalem was being destroyed and Jeremiah was lamenting over its destruction.)
3. Gen 15:1: After this, the word of the LORD came to Abram in a vision: “Do not be afraid, Abram. I am your shield, your very great reward.”
 - a. “After this” is a reference to Abram’s conversation with the king of Sodom, in Gen 14, and the king’s desire to reward Abram; Abram would not take a reward from Sodom’s king, for his victory in battle, lest someone else besides God get glory for Abram’s prosperity.
 - b. Though not commonly done so by modern translators, Gen 15:1’s word translated here as “shield” (מָגֵן, *māgēn*) can also be translated as Sovereign or King (e.g. Deut 33:29; 2 Sa 22:3; Ps 7:10; 84:9).
 - c. Abram’s relationship with the LORD is to be his greatest treasure (i.e., his “very great reward”; cf. Deut 10:9); with this dynamic in place, Abram’s reward from God (15:2-6) is his promise to make Abram’s descendants as numerous as the stars. Abram believes this promise, an act that is accounted to him as the right thing to do—“Abram believed the LORD, and he credited it to him as righteousness.”
 - d. The word “reward” is from the MT’s שָׂכָר (*sachar*), which the LXX translates with μισθός (*misthos*) a term seen in Matt 6:1ff and Heb 11:5-6.
4. James 2:5: Listen, my dear brothers: Has not God chosen those who are poor in the eyes of the world to be rich in faith and to inherit (κληρονόμος, *klēronomos*) the kingdom he promised those who love him?

He Who forms the Mountains, Creates the Wind
Reveals His Thoughts to Man
 Turns Dawn to Darkness, and Treads the High Places of the Earth

Amos 3:11 – 4:12-13: This is what the Sovereign LORD says: “An enemy will overrun the land; he will pull down your strongholds and plunder your fortresses. ¹² As a shepherd saves from the lion’s mouth only two leg bones or a piece of an ear, so will the Israelites be saved ... ¹⁴ On the day I punish Israel for

her sins ...^{4,2} The time will surely come when you will be taken away ...⁴ Go to Bethel and sin; go to Gilgal and sin yet more. Bring your sacrifices every morning, your tithes every three years.⁵ Burn leavened bread as a sacrifice offering and brag about your free will offerings – boast about them, you Israelites, for this is what you love to do, declares the Sovereign LORD.⁶ I gave you empty stomachs in every city and lack of bread in every town, yet you have not returned to me ...¹² Therefore this is what I will do to you, Israel, and because I will do this to you, prepare to meet your God, O Israel.”¹³ He who forms the mountains, creates the wind, and *reveals his thoughts to man*, he who turns dawn to darkness, and treads the high places of the earth—the LORD God Almighty is his name.

- Isa 64:1-8; 1 Co 2:6-12; Eph 3:20-21

God Who Relents from Sending Calamity

Jonah 3:10; 4:1-4: When God saw what they did and how they turned from their evil ways, he had compassion and did not bring upon them the destruction he had threatened.¹ But Jonah was greatly displeased and became angry.² He prayed to the LORD, “O LORD, is this not what I said when I was still at home? That is why I was so quick to flee to Tarshish. I knew that you are a gracious and compassionate God, slow to anger and abounding in love, a *God who relents from sending calamity*.³ Now, O Lord, take away my life, for it is better for me to die than to live.”⁴ But the Lord replied, “Have you any right to be angry?”

- Twice Jonah wanted to die – when God spared Nineveh and when he destroyed the vine that brought Jonah comfort and shade – and twice God asked, “Do you have a right to be angry? (4:3, 9).
- Both times God wanted Jonah to understand his heart towards him and others – a heart of compassion that relents from sending calamity – and his desire to have a people that serve, trust, and follow him unconditionally.
- To the truly repentant heart, the LORD is the God of a 2nd chance, and a 3rd, and ...

A Wall of Fire Around It

Zech 2:4–8: “Jerusalem will be a city without walls because of the great number of men and livestock in it.⁵ And I myself will be *a wall of fire around it*,” declares the LORD, “and I will be its glory within.”⁸ This is what the LORD Almighty says ... “whoever touches you touches the apple of his eye.”

- The above prophecy is found within the second of eight night visions (1:7-6:8), all with a similar theme. Zechariah’s name, which means “The LORD remembers,” fits the message he declares to Judah: “Return to me and I will return to you” (1:3). He was a prophet, priest, and contemporary of Haggai; both preachers encouraged the people to rebuild the temple.
 - The LORD is God’s covenantal name, meant as a reminder of his faithfulness to his covenantal promises (cf. Ge 2:4; Ex 3:14-15; 6:6; Dt 28:58). The LORD “remembers” his covenant with his people and fulfills his promises to them. “In the book of Zechariah God’s promised deliverance from Babylonian exile, including a restored kingdom community and a functioning temple ... leads into even grander pictures of the salvation and restoration to come through the Messiah.” (NIVSB introductory notes to the book)
- Zech 9:8–12 amplifies the above thoughts, with promise of the coming Messiah: “I will defend my house against marauding forces ... Rejoice greatly, O Daughter of Zion! Shout, Daughter of Jerusalem! See, your king comes to you, righteous and having salvation, gentle and riding on a donkey, on a colt, the foal of a donkey. I will take away the chariots from Ephraim and the war-horses from Jerusalem, and the battle bow will be broken. He will

proclaim peace to the nations. His rule will extend from sea to sea and from the River to the ends of the earth. As for you, because of the blood of my covenant with you, I will free your prisoners from the waterless pit. Return to your fortress, O prisoners of hope; even now I announce that I will restore twice as much to you.” For similar messianic thoughts, see 3:8-9; 4:3, 14; 6:9-15; 9:9-10; 10:2, 4; 11:4-14; 12:10-13:1; 13:7; 14:4-9.

- This theme of the LORD fulfilling his promises and protecting his people is celebrated in Ps 105, which admonishes the believer to “Give thanks to the LORD, call on his name; make known among the nations what he has done” (v. 1). For he maintained his promise to Abraham and his covenant to Israel (vv. 8-10): “When they were but few in number, few indeed, and strangers in it ... He allowed no one to oppress them; for their sake he rebuked kings” (vv. 12, 14). “He gave [his people] the lands of the nations, and they fell heir to what others had toiled for – that they might keep his precepts and observe his laws. Praise the LORD” (44, 45).
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Significant OT Messianic Names

There are many messianic names for Jesus that are not mentioned below, because they find fuller expression in:

1. A forthcoming NT entry, where Jesus' messianic identity isn't as much hidden as it is revealed; e.g., Zech 6:12-13's mention of the Messiah, who will be "a Priest" is listed with Heb 2:17 "A Merciful and Faithful High Priest" in "Names of God Canonically Listed – NT."
2. A previously listed OT name of God, where Jesus' messianic identity is strongly characterized with an attribute of the LORD; e.g., Isa 10:10's mention of the Messiah, who will be "a banner for the people," is listed with Exo 17:15 "The LORD Is My Standard, Banner" in "Hebrew Names with LORD."

For a complete list of names for Jesus, Cf. "Names of Jesus" found in the Appendix.

Anointed One

Ps 2:2, 4–7: The kings of the earth take their stand and the rulers gather together against the LORD and against his *Anointed One*. ⁴The One enthroned in heaven laughs; the Lord scoffs at them. Then he rebukes them in his anger and terrifies them in his wrath, saying, "I have installed my King on Zion, my holy hill." I will proclaim the decree of the Lord: He said to me, "You are my Son; today I have become your Father.

1. Psalm 2 is a prophetic, messianic psalm that depicts Israel's messiah as the LORD's Son (7) and installed King (6).
2. No doubt, this Psalm initially served as an enthronement song for the Davidic kings.
3. This psalm is closely tied to God's promise to David in 2 Sam 7:1-17, but especially so with respect to vv. 13-14 that declares the LORD's promises to:
 - a. Raise up from David's offspring a son to whom the LORD would be a father.
 - b. Enable this Son to build "a house for my Name" and "establish his kingdom."
4. Many scholars see Psalms one and two serving as a two part introduction to the remaining 150 psalms, the latter declaring the sovereignty of the LORD's reign through his Son (1-9), the King, but also the wisdom of God's people serving the "Anointed One" and the blessedness of taking "refuge in him" (10-12).
5. This psalm is foundational to NT thoughts about God's Anointed (Acts 4:25-28), God's Son (Matt 3:17). To rebel against God's Anointed One, the Christ, is also to rebel against the LORD, who anointed him. Nonetheless, when people are confronted with the truth of Jesus, they often "gnash their teeth."
 - a. In the disciple's prayer, after Peter & John's inquisition by the Sanhedrin, Psalm 2's "Anointed One" is used to refer to God's "holy servant Jesus," who suffered much at the hands of men (Acts 4:26-28); within this context, the name "Anointed One" is paralleled with "Jesus Christ of Nazareth" – the stone the builders rejected who suffered at their hands (4:10-11) – and the "name under heaven given to men by which we must be saved," for "salvation is found in no one else" (Acts 4:12).
 - b. Though typically translated in Acts 3 differently by most English Bibles, Peter uses this same phrase of Acts 4:26 – *his Christ, ho Christos autou* – in his sermon to those who saw the lame beggar healed (3:18); in this speech, he parallels the name Christ, Anointed One, with the name of Jesus and the concepts of the prophet God would raise up from among Israel like Moses, Christ's passion, and the Anointed One's coming reign. Peter and John experienced the first Christian inquisition, because they insisted that Jesus was God's Anointed One, but they boldly held strong to this testimony and were encouraged by the LORD through a fresh infilling of his Holy Spirit and signs following (Acts 3:1-4:31).
 - c. Lord Jesus, all authority in heaven and earth has been given to you! Help me to follow you and partner with you, as you immerse those around me into the fullness of your name: Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. Come Holy Spirit, empower me and fill me afresh. Thank you for the privilege of serving you, living within your kingdom, and experiencing your refuge. "The Lord will fulfill [his purpose] for me; your love, O Lord,

endures forever—do not abandon the works of your hands.” (Ps 138:8; 1 Cor 11:1; Matt 28:18-20; Rom 15:1-7; Eph 5:18; Phil 2:1-11; 2 Cor 5:18-6:2).

6. These above concepts loom large within the Bible and are especially meaningful to the Christian, with the NT’s prolific thoughts on Christ, the Anointed One.
7. See also:
 - a. Cf. Matt 16:16 (The Christ, the Son of the Living God) in “Names of God Canonically Listed – NT.”
 - b. Cf. John 4:25-26 (The Messiah) in “The I Am Statements of John’s Gospel.”
 - c. Cf. Ps 2:1-2, 6-9; Acts 4:25-26; Dan 9:25; John 1:41 (Messiah, the Christ) in “Names of God Canonically Listed – NT.”

Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God Everlasting Father Prince of Peace

For to us a child is born, to us a son is given, and the government will be on his shoulders. And he will be called *Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace*. Of the increase of his government and peace there will be no end. He will reign on David’s throne and over his kingdom, establishing and upholding it with justice and righteousness from that time on and forever. The zeal of the LORD Almighty will accomplish this. Isa 9:6–7

- As the Prince of Peace, Jesus is the source, origin, and sustainer of our peace.
- Two Hebrew greetings are still used today, with the word peace generally in mind:
 - A general “hello” or “goodbye” is uttered by saying, “*Shalom*.” (שָׁלוֹם, šālôm, shah-LOHM).
 - A general “Peace be upon you” by *Shalom Aleikhem* (shah-LOHM ah-ley-KHEM; cf. Ps 128:6)
- We can have peace in three areas:
 - With God, “in all things,” through our Lord Jesus Christ (Rom 5:2).
 - Within ourselves, internally – a “peace of God” that surpasses our understanding, because of prayer (Phil 4:7).
 - Amongst ourselves, externally – the “**God of peace**” in our midst, because of how we think and live (Phil 4:8-9; cf. Rom 15:33; 16:20; 1 Thess 5:23; Heb 13:20 where this same name is used for the LORD).
 - Each of these three realms of peace are interrelated: when our heart submits to God’s kingdom of peace, his peaceable kingdom grows within us and through us to others (Rom 14:17-19; Eph 4:3).
- Isa 52:7 How beautiful on the mountains are the feet of those who bring good news, who proclaim peace, who bring good tidings, who proclaim salvation, who say to Zion, “Your God reigns!”
- “If we the faithful, being born again, become children again, we have a new Father whose force brought us forth; this Father is the Christ. It is for this reason that he is called the Everlasting Father, because he is the principal and origin of this new and blessed generation.” (*The Names of Christ* by Luis de Leon, 120; underline added)
- Related names:
 - Gen 17:1 (God Almighty) in “Hebrew Names with God.”
 - Deut 32:6 (Father) in “Other Primary Hebrew Names for God.”
 - Judg 6:24 (The LORD Is Peace) in “Hebrew Names with LORD.”

The kingdom of God is not a matter of eating and drinking, but of righteousness, peace and joy in the Holy Spirit, because anyone who serves Christ in this way is pleasing to God and approved by men.

Let us therefore make every effort to do what leads to peace and to mutual edification.

Do not destroy the work of God for the sake of [a disputable matter].

(Rom 14:17-20)

Servant

“Here is my *servant*, whom I uphold, my chosen one in whom I delight; I will put my Spirit on him and he will bring justice to the nations. He will not shout or cry out, or raise his voice in the streets. A bruised reed he will not break, and a smoldering wick he will not snuff out. In faithfulness he will bring forth

justice; he will not falter or be discouraged till he establishes justice on earth. In his law the islands will put their hope.” Isa 42:1–4¹³

1. In the royal terminology of the ancient Near East, to be a “servant” meant to be a trusted envoy, confidential representative, or chosen one; e.g., my servant Moses (Nu 12:7), my servant David (2 Sa 3:18; 7:5, 8), my servants the prophets (2 Ki 17:13; Jer 7:25).
2. “Servant” is a significant concept in Isa 41-53; within these chapters the term “servant” can refer to:
 - a. God’s people of faith (shown by the word’s plural form or context in Isaiah). The nation of Israel was to be God’s servant (Isa 41:8; 44:1, 21; 45:4; 49:3, 6), a kingdom of priests (Ex 19:6), and a chosen people by God to represent the LORD to the nations.
 - i. LORD, help my local church to so represent you! May we be your ambassadors!
 - b. An individual (shown by the word’s singular form in Isaiah). Here, the title “servant” refers, at a minimum, to one who occupies a special position in God’s royal administration of his kingdom. Most Christians see this term in Isaiah prophesying about Jesus, the Servant-Messiah.
 - i. God’s *Messianic Servant* would deliver the world from its bondage to sin (Isa 42:1-7; 53:4-12); upon him would rest God’s Spirit without measure (cf. Isa 11, 42 and 61). But this is not how 2nd Temple Judaism understood him; their messiah would liberate them from political oppression. LORD, will I also misunderstand the nature of your 2nd coming to us?
 - ii. Isaiah 45 depicts Cyrus, king of Persia, as God’s anointed servant that will deliverer Israel from Babylon. Pharaoh, Assyria and others are also so represented, but in a bad way. LORD, may I nor those I love EVER be that vessel for ignoble or common usage (Rom 9:19-21; 2 Tim 2:20-21).
3. Similar to Isaiah’s teaching about the Servant-Messiah, Jesus is often characterized in the gospels as a humble servant of the LORD, which caused others to miss him as the Messiah. Amazing are the ways of God!
 - a. Matt 12:15-21, a direct quote from Isaiah, reads as follows: “Many followed [Jesus], and he healed all their sick, warning them not to tell who he was. This was to fulfill what was spoken through the prophet Isaiah: ‘Here is my servant ...’”
 - b. Several other significant NT passages with respect to Jesus and service include Matt 20:28; Mark 10:42–45; John 13:1-17; Rom 15:1-7; Phil 2:5–11.

A Witness A Leader and Commander

Isa 55:1–4: Come, all you who are thirsty, come to the waters; and you who have no money, come, buy and eat! Come, buy wine and milk without money and without cost. Why spend money on what is not bread, and your labor on what does not satisfy? Listen, listen to me, and eat what is good, and your soul will delight in the richest of fare. Give ear and come to me; hear me, that your soul may live. I will make an everlasting covenant with you, my faithful love promised to David. See, I have made him *a witness* to the peoples, *a leader* and *commander* of the peoples.

1. For many reasons, this is a reference to the Davidic-Messiah, not Israel, nor David; Young’s thoughts on this matter within the WBC entry on Isa 55:1-4 read as follow: “YHWH points to a new leader to assume the mantle and responsibilities [vol. 25, p. 818] of David in such a covenant. His task is to be a “witness [עֵד] for peoples” of YHWH’s sovereignty and providence. He will be “a leader and commander for peoples” to carry out YHWH’s will to establish peace and order in the realm.”
2. This from TC Horton, Day 93’s entry in the *Wonderful Names of Our Wonderful Lord*:
 - a. “From the beginning of our Christian lives the fact that he leads me is one of the most blessed thoughts that comes to a child of God. But we think most often of his leading us to battle, leaving us out of the mazes of confusion and ignorance, leading us through the darkness of our night. Do we realize that infinite tenderness that makes him gently lead those who are doing the finest and the most difficult and the most unknown service of the world? The sorrow, the loneliness, the pain, which no friend on earth can know, he

¹³ עֵד = *Eved* = ‘ebed = e-VED; δούλος or παῖς.

understands, he feels with us, and gently leads us through the shadows to his own great glory. Will we not follow where he leads and keep so close to him that we will never miss the way?"

3. Cf. Josh 5:13-15; 1 Sam 17:45 (The LORD of Hosts) in "Hebrew Names with LORD."

A Man of Sorrows A Stranger, An Alien, The Needy One

Isaiah 53:3; Ps 69:8; 109:31: ^{53:3} [The LORD's servant] will be raised and lifted up and highly exalted ... He was despised and rejected by men, *a man of sorrows*, and familiar with suffering. ^{69:8} I am *a stranger* to my brothers, *an alien* to my own mother's sons; for zeal for your house consumes me, and the insults of those who insult you fall on me. ^{109:31} [The LORD] stands at the right hand of *the needy one*, to save his life from those who condemn him. ¹⁴

How can this be?
The Servant, the Stranger, the Alien, the Chosen One –
Once painfully and shamefully alone,
Yet always aware of me.
He made me a friend, gave me a home,
Allowing me to rejoice and be set free,
By his testimony,
His comradeship, solace, and victory!
(Peter Dubbelman)

1. 1 Peter instructs us how to live and experience good days, by both reminding us of our position as "aliens and strangers in the world" and pointing us to Jesus' example (1 Pe 2:11, 21; 3:10-11); however, Hebrews does so more fully: similar to all of God's men and women of faith, who were "aliens and strangers on earth" (Heb 11:13), we too must run our race but we can do so by fixing "our eyes on Jesus, the author and perfecter of our faith" (12:2).
 - a. *Resident Aliens: Life in the Christian Colony* is still a book worth reading and in parts related to this topic.
2. Christian: a citizen of a heavenly place, laboring with God to make an earthly difference. (tweeted Mar '15; Jan '16; June '16)
3. In Ps 39, the psalmist realizes that life is short and that his sins have made him as a "stranger" and "alien" to God (39:12), but he still makes his hope in God as he cries out to the LORD for help (7-8). This is the great exchange: Jesus becoming the stranger in our place, taking sin upon him, that we might become the friend of God.
4. Lord, minus your Holy Spirit's help, "Who can discern his errors? Forgive my hidden faults." "Search me O God, and know my heart ... See if there is any offensive way in me, and lead me in the way everlasting." "Teach me to do your will, for you are my God; may your good Spirit lead me on level ground." (Ps 19:12; 139:23-24; 143:10)
 - a. When a brother or sister suffers, will I share in their circumstance? Run from it? Ignore it? Wrongly judge it? (John 9:1 ff)
 - b. Will I rejoice in my sufferings, for Christ?
 - c. Will I come to God, in all my sufferings, even when my distress is to no fault of my own? What will I do, if they are self-induced by my own wrong choices?
 - d. Lord Jesus, at the end of things you suffered minus earthly companionship, bearing my cross of shame! I worship you! Help me to value hardships and sufferings as opportunities to grow in you, to allow life to come forth from death ... and to draw near to you.
5. In a salvific way, Christians don't add to Christ's sufferings; they do, however, share in them as a means by which God brings forth light into darkness, life into death, and joy into sorrow: Matt 5:10-16; Mark 8:34-9:1; Rom 12:1-3; Phil 3:8-11; 2 Cor 4:7-12; Col 1:24; 1 Thes 3:2-4; 2 Tim 3:10-13; 1 Peter 1:6-7; 4:12-13; Rev 12:10-11.
 - a. "It takes spiritual discernment to see in a situation of injustice (like the persecution of the innocent) evidence of the just judgment of God. Our habit is to see only the surface appearance, and so to make only superficial comments. We see the malice, cruelty, power and arrogance of evil men who persecute. We see also the

¹⁴ Both psalms 69 and 109 are prayers for help, when experiencing vicious attack and false accusations. Peter understood both Ps 69:25 and 109:8 as referring to Judas (cf. Acts 1:20), which places these two psalms at the heart of Jesus' passion. With a similar understanding, Psalms 69 & 109 are also prolifically quoted in the NT (e.g., John 2:17; 15:25; Rom 11:9-10; 15:3) and equally referenced (Matt. 27:48; Luke 23:36; John 1:11; 19:29; Heb 12:2).

sufferings of the people of God who are opposed, ridiculed, boycotted, harassed, imprisoned, tortured and killed. . . . We are tempted to inveigh against God and the miscarriage of justice. ‘Why doesn’t God do something?’ we complain indignantly. And the answer is that he *is* doing something and will go on doing it. He is allowing His people to suffer, in order to qualify them for a heavenly kingdom. He is allowing the wicked to triumph temporarily, but his just judgment will fall upon them in the end. Thus Paul sees *evidence that God’s judgment is right* in the very situation in which we might see nothing but injustice.” (John Stott, *The Gospel and the End*, 147, emphasis in the original)

- b. When we are involved in “Christ’s afflictions” and offer our bodies as “living sacrifices,” “death is at work in us, so that life may be at work in others.” (Rom 12:1-3; 2 Cor 4:12; Col 1:24)
 - c. You’re not made worthy of God’s kingdom, because you suffer, but seen as part of God’s kingdom and counted worthy of it, because you suffer. (Tweeted 02-16)
 - d. “God whispers to us in our pleasures, speaks in our conscience, but shouts in our pain: it is His megaphone to rouse a deaf world.” – C.S. Lewis (Tweeted 06-16)
 - e. If Jesus learned obedience through the things he suffered, what makes us think that we won’t experience difficulties? But will we learn from them?
6. Cf. Isa 53:3-7; Ps 22:24; 69:6-9, 20, 26, 29-31; 109:1-4, 8-9, 22, 29-31; Isa 42:1-9; Matt 12:15-21; Isa 52:13-53:12; 1 Pe 2:21-25; John 10:17-18; Rom 8:17-18; 12:1-3; 1 Cor 12:26; 2 Cor 1:5; 4:10-11; Eph 5:1-2; Phil 2:5-11; 3:10-11; Col 1:24-27; 2 Tim 3:10-12; Heb 2:9-10; 10:32; 11:13; 1 Pet 1:17-21; 2:11, 21; 4:13; 5:6-11; 1 John 4:8-12.

The Branch

Zech 6:12-13: Tell him this is what the LORD Almighty says: “Here is the man whose name is the *Branch*, and he will branch out from his place and build the temple of the LORD. It is he who will build the temple of the LORD, and he will be clothed with majesty and will sit and rule on his throne. And he will be a priest on his throne. And there will be harmony between the two.” [That is, between priest and king]

1. Cf. Isa 4:2-6; 11:1-3; 53:1-4; 61:1-4; Jer 23:5-6; 33:14-16; Zech 3:8-10; 6:12-13
2. “Branch,” in its verb form (נָצַח, *šāmah*), is used in contextual settings that involve the ideas of growing, budding, being fruitful, and sprouting. During the Reformation its noun cognate was often translated as “bud.”
3. Related names:
 - a. Isa 4:2-4: In that day the **Branch of the Lord** will be beautiful and glorious, and the fruit of the land will be the pride and glory of the survivors in Israel. Those who are left in Zion, who remain in Jerusalem, will be called holy, all who are recorded among the living in Jerusalem. The Lord will wash away the filth of the women of Zion; he will cleanse the bloodstains from Jerusalem by a spirit of judgment and a spirit of fire.
 - b. Isa 11:1, 10: A **shoot** will come up from the stump of Jesse; from his roots a Branch will bear fruit. In that day the **Root of Jesse** will stand as a banner for the peoples; the nations will rally to him, and his place of rest will be glorious.
 - c. Isa 53:2: He grew up before him like a **tender shoot**, and like a **root out of dry ground**. He had no beauty or majesty to attract us to him, nothing in his appearance that we should desire him.
 - d. Jer 23:5; 33:15: “The days are coming,” declares the LORD, “when I will raise up to David a **righteous Branch**, a King who will reign wisely and do what is just and right in the land. “In those days and at that time I will make a righteous Branch sprout from David’s line; he will do what is just and right in the land.
 - e. Zech 3:8-10: “Listen, O high priest Joshua and your associates seated before you, who are men symbolic of things to come: I am going to bring **my servant, the Branch**. . . .⁹ I will remove the sin of this land in a single day. ¹⁰“In that day each of you will invite his neighbor to sit under his vine and fig tree,” declares the Lord Almighty.”
 - f. For Jeremiah’s messianic perspective on this name, see Jer 23:6 (The LORD our Righteousness) in “Hebrew Names with LORD.”
4. With respect to the above “related names”:
 - a. Jeremiah 23 parallels Zech 3’s Branch with the thought of the coming King, who “will reign wisely and do what is just and right,”
 - b. Zechariah 3 thematically connects to with the above thoughts about the Branch being a descendant of David.
 - c. Isaiah 11, with the imminent Messiah.

- d. But Isa 4:2 (cf. 53:1ff) joins the name Branch with the name LORD – Branch of the LORD; it also relates it to a time of fruitfulness for the remnant, who “will be called holy,” much like Zech 3.
5. John’s gospel portrays Jesus doing things in the Father’s name and commissioning his disciples to do things in his name; similarly, it speaks of Jesus’ disciples as branches (15:5) and portrays them as being sent forth by Jesus, asking in his name, doing things in his name ... and living because of his name (John 5:43; 10:25; 14:13; 15:1, 16, 21).
 - a. John 15:1–9: “I am the true vine, and my Father is the vineyard keeper. He removes any of my branches that don’t produce fruit, and he trims any branch that produces fruit so that it will produce even more fruit. You are already trimmed because of the word I have spoken to you. Remain in me, and I will remain in you. A branch can’t produce fruit by itself, but must remain in the vine. Likewise, you can’t produce fruit unless you remain in me. ⁵ I am the vine; you are the branches. If you remain in me and I in you, then you will produce much fruit. Without me, you can’t do anything. ⁶ If you don’t remain in me, you will be like a branch that is thrown out and dries up. Those branches are gathered up, thrown into a fire, and burned. If you remain in me and my words remain in you, ask for whatever you want and it will be done for you. My Father is glorified when you produce much fruit and in this way prove that you are my disciples. “As the Father loved me, I too have loved you. Remain in my love.
 - b. The fruit that remains, when one is no longer present, is the true witness of one’s current effectiveness. Jesus has no equal in this area. (Tweeted Mar 2015; Jan ‘16)
6. Per Zec 6:12’s phrase, “Here is the man whose name is the Branch,” we read about a portion of Jesus’ week of passion in John 19:4-6 and wonder if there is meant, at a minimum, to be a symbolic connection, unknown by Pilate but aware to us, between the Bible’s concept of Branch and Pilate’s declaration: Jesus came forth “wearing the crown of thorns and the purple robe.” Pilate told the Jewish leaders, “I find no basis for a charge against him ... Here is the man!” The chief priests and their officials shouted, “Crucify! Crucify!”
 - a. Severed from God – “My God, my God why have you forsaken me? (Ps 22:1; Matt 27:46) – did Jesus, who became sin also become like John 15:6’s branch thrown into the fire?

The Messenger of the Covenant A Refiner and Purifier

Mal 3:1-3: See, I will send my messenger, who will prepare the way before me. Then suddenly the Lord you are seeking will come to his temple; the *Messenger of the Covenant* whom you desire, will come,” says the LORD Almighty. He will be like a refiner’s fire or a launderer’s soap. He will sit as a *refiner and purifier of silver*; he will purify the Levites and refine them like gold and silver.

1. The above “Messenger” is from the MT’s מַלְאָכִי, mal’ak and LXX’s ἄγγελος, *angelos*.
 - a. The appearance of the “Angel of the LORD” (אֱלֹהִים, מַלְאָכִי, mal’ak yhw) is a common OT occurrence, which can, at times, unmistakably refer to the LORD himself (Gen 16:7, 9–11; 22:11, 15; Exod 3:2; Num 22:22–27, 31–32, 34–35; Judg 2:1, 4; 5:23; 6:11–12, 21–22; 13:3, 13, 15–18, 20–21; 2 Sam 24:16; 1 Kgs 19:7; 2 Kgs 1:3, 15; 19:35; Isa 37:36; Hag 1:13; Zech 1:11–12; 3:1, 5–6; 12:8; Mal 2:7; Ps 34:8; 35:5–6; 1 Chr 21:12, 15–16, 18, 30).
2. Related names:
 - a. 1 Tim 2:5-6: For there is one God and one **mediator** (μεσίτης, *mesitēs*) between God and men, the man Christ Jesus, who gave himself as a ransom for all men—the **testimony** (τὸ μαρτύριον, *to martyrion*) given in its proper time. Cf. Heb 7:21-22; 8:6, 13; 9:15; 12:23–24
 - b. Gen 48:15–16: Then [Israel] blessed Joseph and said, “May the God before whom my fathers Abraham and Isaac walked, the God who has been my shepherd all my life to this day, the **Angel** who has delivered me from all harm — may he bless these boys [Ephraim & Manasseh]. (מַלְאָכִי, mal’āk)
 - c. Isa 42:6–7: I, the LORD, have called you in righteousness; I will take hold of your hand. I will keep you and will make you to be a **covenant for the people** and a light for the Gentiles, to open eyes that are blind, to free captives from prison and to release from the dungeon those who sit in darkness. (אֲמֵן יְיָ, בִּרְיָ, בִּרְיָ, בִּרְיָ, בִּרְיָ, בִּרְיָ, b°rît ‘ām)
3. Jesus’ role as mediator of a new covenant that involves purification is consistent and explicit throughout the NT; significant NT scriptures using the καθαρο* root (clean/purify) follow:
 - a. The premier teaching of Jesus on this topic revolve around the “Six Woes” and “clean and unclean cups”: Matt 15:1-20; Mark 7:1-23; Luke 11:33-53

- b. Cf. Mark 1:40–41; 7:17-23; John 15:1-4; Acts 15:8-9; 2 Cor 6:16-7:1; Eph 5:25-26; 1 Tim 1:5; 2 Tim 1:3; 2:20-22; Titus 1:15; 2:11–14; Heb 1:3; 9:13-15, 22; Jas 1:26-27; 4:7-8; 1 Pet 1:22-23; 1 John 1:7–9.
- 4. Only by virtue of being both God and man is Christ the mediator:
 - a. “The Maker of man was made man, that the Ruler of the stars might suck at the breast; that the Bread might be hungered; the Fountain, thirst; the Light, sleep; the Way, be wearied by the journey; the Truth, be accused by false witness; the Judge of the living and the dead, be judged by a mortal judge; the Chastener, be chastised with whips; the Vine, be crowned with thorns; the Foundation, be hung upon the tree; Strength, be made weak; Health, be wounded; life, die. To suffer these and suchlike things, undeserved things, that He might free the undeserving, for neither did He deserve any evil, who for our sakes endured so many evils, nor were we deserving of anything good, we who through Him received such good.” Augustine
- 5. And to what end is this mediation, with respect to our lives here on earth?
 - a. 2 Cor 5:14–15: For Christ’s love compels us, because we are convinced that one died for all, and therefore all died. And he died for all, that those who live should no longer live for themselves but for him who died for them and was raised again.
 - b. Titus 2:11–15: For the grace of God that brings salvation has appeared to all men. It teaches us to say “No” to ungodliness and worldly passions, and to live self-controlled, upright and godly lives in this present age, while we wait for the blessed hope — the glorious appearing of our great God and Savior, Jesus Christ, who gave himself for us to redeem us from all wickedness and to purify for himself a people that are his very own, eager to do what is good. These, then, are the things you should teach. Encourage and rebuke with all authority. Do not let anyone despise you.
- 6. Related Names:
 - a. Cf. 1 Sam 6:20 (Holy God) in “Hebrew Names with God.”
- 7. “Just as one person did it wrong and got us in all this trouble with sin and death, another person did it right and got us out of it. But more than just getting us out of trouble, he got us into life!” (Msg, Rom 5:18)

But in keeping with his promise we are looking forward to a new heaven and a new earth,
the home of righteousness.

So then, dear friends, since you are looking forward to this,
make every effort to be found spotless, blameless and at peace with him.

2 Pet 3:13–14

Sun of Righteousness

Mal 4:1-2: “Surely the day is coming; it will burn like a furnace. All the arrogant and every evildoer will be stubble, and that day that is coming will set them on fire,” says the LORD Almighty. “Not a root or a branch will be left to them. But for you who revere my name, the *Sun of Righteousness* will rise with healing in its wings. And you will go out and leap like calves released from the stall.

- 1. NLT and NJB capitalize *Sun of Righteousness*; NIV, NAS, and ESV do not.
- 2. Using the word sun, as a metaphor to describe God is not common in the Bible, for two reasons: sun gods were prevalent within both ANE (OT) and Greek (NT) cultures; the second commandment forbids the worship of physical images of God. Nonetheless, an imagery link between God and the sun does appear in a few select scriptures.
 - a. Cf. Ps 84:10–12; 112:4; Isa 9:1-2; 60:19; Matt 13:40–43; 17:1–3; Lu 1:76-79; Acts 26:11–14; Rev 1:16; 21:23; 22:4–5; John 8:12 (*The Light of the World*) in “The I Am Statements of John’s Gospel.”
- 3. Related names:
 - a. John the Baptist’s father, Zechariah, declares with heavy prophetic and messianic overtones that his son will go before the Lord and prepare the way for “**the Rising Sun**” that will come from heaven (Lu 1:78).
 - b. Cf. Jer 23:6 (The LORD Our Righteousness) in “Hebrew Names with LORD.”