

SYSTEMATIC THEOLOGY



תאולוגיה
Θεολογία

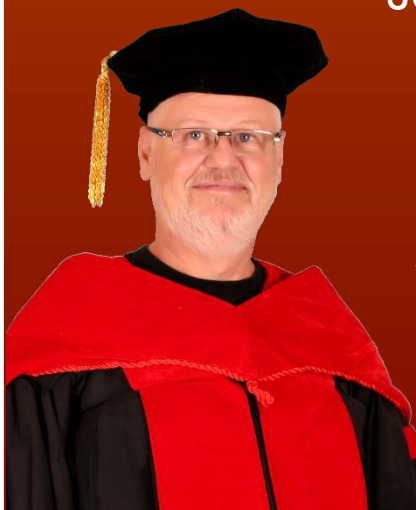
The doctrine of
„Theology is discovering,
arranging, and presenting the
truths related to God.“

Dr. Charles C. Ryrie

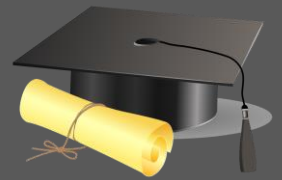
Systematical Theology: takes the results
of the exegetical and historical Theology
and places these into a system. It is
deductive and contains therefore
Apologetics and Ethics.

And this is eternal life, that they may
know You, the only true God, and
Jesus Christ whom You sent.

[VW] John 17:3



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Theology

„The teaching about GOD“ „ Proper Theology“ „Theology“

[VW] Psalms 86:6

Give ear, O YaHWeH , unto my prayer; and give attention to the voice of my supplications.

7 In the day of my distress I will call upon You, for You will answer me.

8 Among the gods there is none like You, O Lord; nor any like Your works.

9 All nations whom You have made shall come and bow down before You, O Lord, and shall glorify Your name;

10 for You are great, and do wondrous things; You alone are God.

11 Teach me Your way, O YaHWeH ; I will walk in Your truth; unite my heart to fear Your name.

12 I will praise You, O Lord my God, with all my heart, and I will glorify Your name always.

[VW] Psalms 147:5

Great is our Lord, and of great power; His understanding is infinite.

[VW] John 17:3

And this is eternal life, that they may know You, the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom You sent.

[VW] 1Corinthians 2:9

9 But as it is written: Eye has not seen, nor ear heard, nor has it dawned upon the heart of man the things which God has prepared for those who love Him.

10 But God has revealed them to us through His Spirit. For the Spirit searches all things, yes, the deep things of God.

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Prolegomena

– Introduction into Theology –

1 The Term „Theology“

„Theology“ comes from two Greek words **ΘΕΟΣ** - GOD and **ΛΟΓΟΣ** - Word / Speech. „Theology“ is a Word, Speech or Expression about GOD. Yeshua the Messiah is called **ΛΟΓΟΣ** in the Greek translation of the Gospel of the **שליח** (Apostel) **יוחנן** Jochanan (John) The Messiah is called there **the word of GOD** whereas in the Hebrew HE is called Eloah¹ (Joh 1,1-4), and the bible is the written word of GOD. ([VW] [2Timothy 3:16](#) All Scripture is breathed by God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness,). The following Bible verses are using this expression:

[VW] [Luke 8:21](#) But He answered and said to them, My mother and My brothers are these who hear the Word of God and **do** it.

[VW] [Romans 3:2](#) Much in every way: chiefly because they were entrusted with the Words of God.

[VW] [1Peter 4:11](#) If anyone speaks, let him speak as the words of God. If anyone ministers, let him do it as with the strength which God supplies, that in all things God may be glorified through Jesus Christ, to whom is the glory and might forever and ever. Amen.

The Hebrew Gospel of John (1,1-4), tells more about the [son](#) of GOD.

[In the beginning the son was Eloah¹. The son of El² was both with El and the son of El was Eloah.³](#)

2 The different kinds of Theology

There are different divisions of Theology; here is a selection, partly with comments:

2.1 according to the inventor

Augustine's Theology

Calvin's Theology **Luther's Theology** but also:

Paul's Theology, Peter's Theology, John's Theology

¹ Eloah is the Singular form of Elohim

² El is the short Hebrew word for GOD

³ John 1:1 translated from Vat Ebr 100

2.2 according to origin

Geneva's Theology

Oxford's Theology

Augsburg's Theology

2.3 according to Source

reveled Theology: Deals with the facts about GOD that are reveled in the Bible.

natural Theology: Deals with the truth about GOD and HIS creation as it is reveled in nature.

2.4 according to its content

Biblical Theology: Biblical Theology is the theology of the single biblical books with the special attention to the historical succession of the revelation of the holy scriptures. This deals also with the theology of the OT and the NT.

Historical Theology: deals with the historical development of Theology and observes the sectarian odds apart from biblical truth that took place in the past.

Practical Theology: Practical Theology deals with the Method of changing the human life through Theology. It contains themes like Homiletic, Mission and Christian instruction / Doctrine.

2.5 according to Methode

Exegetical Theology: deals with the direct text of the holy scriptures. The exegetical Theology contains Hebrew and also the biblical translations into the languages Syriac und Greek.

Systematical Theology: takes the results of the exegetical and historical Theology and places these into a system. It is deductive and contains therefore Apologetics and Ethics.

3 Some Definitions of Theology

Augustinus: „Theology is a rationalistic discussion of the deity.“

Brockhaus: „Theology is the scientific study of the beliefs of Christianity. Systematic theology deals with the nature and cognitive content of faith.“

Chafer: „Systematic theology is the gathering, scholarly ordering, comparing, presenting, and defending of facts drawn from any source

Fitzwater: „Theology is the science of God, not just his being and art, but also his relationship to the universe.“

Kaftan: „Dogmatics is the science of Christian truth, which is believed and professed in the church on the basis of divine revelation.“

Ryrie: „Theology is discovering, arranging, and presenting the truths related to God.“

Shedd: „Theology is a science that deals with the infinite and the finite, with God and the universe.“

Strong: „Theology is the science of God and the relationships between God and the universe.“

4 The need for systematic theology

Systematic theology is essential!

4.1 Humans have a need to organize

This is a common need, although it is more pronounced in some and less so in others.

4.2 The Study of Theology should have implications for Christian character

It is easier to obey if we understand the teaching. Healthy teaching (Theology) should always promote a holy life.

Paul often prayer for more knowledge of the churches. He knew that this should lead to a holy life. Col 1:9-10 [VW] (Phil 1:9-10):

Colossians 1:9 For this reason we also, since the day we heard it, do not cease to pray for you, and to ask that you may be filled with the full true knowledge of His will in all wisdom and spiritual understanding; 10 that you may walk worthy of the Lord, fully pleasing Him, bearing fruit in every good work and growing into the full true knowledge of God;

4.3 The Bible wants to be understood

It is a characteristically sign of the bible that it should be understood. In 5Mose 29:29 we read:

YaHWeH our God hides Himself; but reveals Himself to us and to our children forever, to do all the Words of this Law.

4.4 The principles of faith must be known

A discerning and effective witness must know the principles of the Christian faith. All honesty and sincerity are no substitute for good knowledge and literacy of God's teaching. Ignorance opens the door to false teachings.

4.5 A healthy church needs a clear theology

The church cannot grow well without a clear theology. The cause of our Lord is advanced only by clear theology.

Paul wrote to Timothy in 2Tim 2:2: [VWⁱ] And the things that you have heard from me among many witnesses, commit these to faithful men who will also be able to teach others. Where the whole counsel of God was known, the church could grow. Only when the content of the Christian faith is known can the church protect itself against attacks.

5 The prerequisites for theology

- We believe in the inspiration and authority of Scripture. The biblical Scripture is absolutely true.
- The Bible has the solid condition of the existence of God and His relationship with a universe.
- Man can know God.
- Man is limited in his knowledge of God. Spiritual enlightenment (illumination) is necessary and assured.
- Man must study the text regularly and patiently. There is no shortcut to Bible study. It takes time, effort and prayer.

6 The limitation of theology

6.1 The human mind is limited

Paul wrote to the Romans 11:33[VW]: Oh, the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God! How unsearchable are His judgments and His ways past finding out!

6.2 Human knowledge of the Bible is incomplete

In Psalm 119,18+19 we read:

18 YaHWeH has chastened and corrected me, but He has not given me over to death.
19 Open unto me the gates of righteousness; I will go through them, and I will praise YaHWeH.

6.3 Human language is inadequate

Paulus wrote in 1Cor 2,13[VW]:

These things we also speak, not in words which human wisdom teaches but which the Holy Spirit teaches, comparing spiritual things with spiritual.

7 The subdivision of the Department of Systematic Theology

7.1 Proper theology (teaching of God)

The doctrine of God, his character and his work.

7.2 Bibliology

The Doctrine of the Scriptures.

7.3 Angelology

The doctrine about Angels, the good and also the bad.

7.4 Satanology

The doctrine about Satan.

7.5 Demonology

The doctrine about Devils.

7.6 Pneumatology

The doctrine about the Holy Spirit.

7.7 Anthropology

The doctrine about humans, the creation, the first sin and fall and his character.

7.8 Christology

The doctrine about Yeshua the Messiah.

7.9 Soteriology

The doctrine about Salvation.

7.10 Hamartiology

The doctrine about the rebellion against GOD

7.11 Ecclesiology

The doctrine about the church.

7.12 Eschatology

The doctrine about the last things.

Proper Theology

– God's teaching –

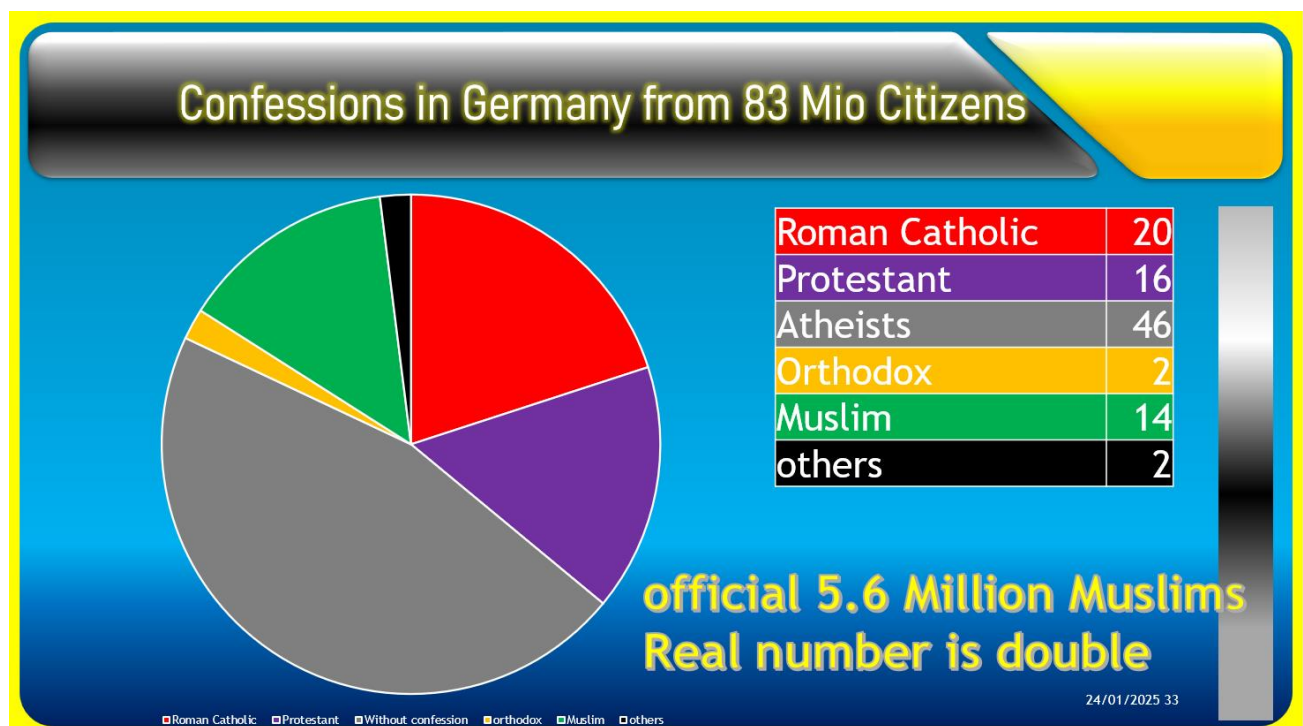
1 Introduction

The question in proper theology is, "Who is God and what is He like?" In our anthropocentric times, many people are concerned with other questions:

- "How can I accept myself?"
- "How can I realize myself?"
- "How can I overcome depression?"
- "How can I understand my children?"

Man is the focus and the question of God is secondary. We're told that we can solve our own problems: "It's up to me if anything happens." The New Age mentality of "we can do anything, we just have to believe in ourselves" reigns supreme. God and even the question of God seems dead to many people. On June 15, 1992, the German famous magazin "Spiegel" published the following statements based on an opinion poll:

Only one in four is a Christian. The Federal Republic has become a pagan country with Christian remnants... In 1967 68% believed in God, now it's only 56%... The churches shouldn't see the number of 56% believers in God as proof that it does there is still a Christian majority. When asked whether they believe in God, Muslims, Jews and other non-Christians can also answer in the affirmative. And it is far from certain that all Protestants and Catholics believe in God the way the churches teach. When Emnid asked the additional question of whether God is omnipotent, a significant proportion of those questioned could not make up their minds to say yes... Most Germans have become new pagans without mourning the loss of their faith.



Although the Bible has a very theocentric emphasis, modern man, including modern Christians, seems to overlook this. J.I. Packer writes of a contemporary emphasis in Christian literature that expresses this:

Looking at current Christian publications, one might think that the most important thing for a real (or would-be) Christian today is the church community, ecumenism, witness in social work, dialogue with other Christians and people of other faiths, the Defense against any -isms, development of a Christian philosophy or culture or whatever. From our preoccupation with the foundations of Christianity, however, this concentration on such things must seem like a gigantic conspiracy for the purpose of misunderstanding. Of course, it's not meant that way; these questions are real and must be dealt with. But it is tragic that because of this special attention for those, so many lose sight of what was and always will be the most important thing: to recognize God in Christ!

The Apostel Paul wrote in 1Cor 2,9-10 [VW]: „... 9 But as it is written: Eye has not seen, nor ear heard, nor has it dawned upon the heart of man the things which God has prepared for those who love Him. 10 But God has revealed them to us through His Spirit. For the Spirit searches all things, yes, the deep things of God.“

Hard to understand! The eternal almighty God of heaven is longing to have fellowship with us mortals. Knowing God is a great privilege and a great responsibility, knowing God should be the ultimate goal of life. Spurgeon agrees: *"The supreme science, the loftiest conception, the strongest philosophy that any child of God can grasp is the name, nature, person, work, deed, and presence of the great God whom he calls his father."*

Jeremiah wrote it aptly (Jeremiah 9:22-23): "Thus says the LORD: Let the wise man not boast in his wisdom, nor let the strong man boast in his strength, let the rich man not boast in his riches; but let the one who boasts boast in this: to have understanding, and to know that I am the LORD, who doth mercy, justice, and righteousness on earth;

for in this I delight, saith the LORD."

Proper Theology deals with existence, persons and the Attributes of the Triune God. The second and third persons of the Trinity and their works are specifically recorded in Christology and Pneumatology.

2 The Existence of God

„The fool has said in his heart, There is no God! They are corrupt; they have done abominable works, there is no one who does good. 2 YaHWeH looked down from Heaven upon the sons of men, to see if there were any who understood and sought God.“ [VW] Psalms 14:1-2

2.1 Imaginations about GOD in the history of Religion

There are different views of God in religious history. Here is a brief synopsis of some well-known ideas.

1. **Atheism:** The atheist denies that there is a personal God. Atheism is a way of life that is geared towards this physical world only. *This is the most foolish believe since it neglects*

all revelation of God in nature and spirit and different realms. Most Atheists make leaders of their theories their Gods, then they are no Atheists anymore and their gods are limited in power.

2. **Animism:** The animist believes that all nature is animated by personal spirits. These spirits are active in all natural phenomena and can help or harm people. *Whereas the observed truth can be seen, though to find the deeper truth and the source of life and spirit should be activated.*
3. **Agnosticism:** The agnostic considers reliable recognition beyond immediate sensory perception to be impossible. He thinks that there is no sufficient basis for a positive or negative attitude toward God. The question of God must remain undecided. *But if there is God and he asked you for a decision then you do wrong to him.*
4. **Deism:** The deists see God as the creator but not the ruler of the world. God is the author or creator of the universe, but has now separated himself from the world. They reject a supernatural working of God. *If God left he does not love what he has created and mankind is left to destroy itself.*
5. **Dualism:** Dualism teaches that the world is ruled by two opposing principles, deities or powers (light - darkness; good - evil; god - satan). Both are eternal and are in conflict with each other. *But where is the origin, is it in the good or evil?*
6. **Fetichism:** Fetichism teaches that a spirit dwells in a lifeless object. This item is revered and believed to provide protection against evil spirits, demons, and supernatural forces. *Why would a lifeless object protect against a powerful spirit when you can call upon the father of Spirits?*
7. **Gnosticism:** teaches the belief that human beings contain a piece of God (the highest good or a divine spark) within themselves, which has fallen from the immaterial world into the bodies of humans. All physical matter is subject to decay, until death. Many Gnostic texts deal not in concepts of sin and repentance, but with illusion and enlightenment.
Sure, we have eternity in our hearts but without being born from above no one can see the Kingdom of GOD also these fail not discerning the spirits.
8. **Idolatry:** Idolatry sees the spirit dwelling in an object made by human hands. That God's relationship with the object is permanent, so the object is always sacred. *Why would God go in an object when he can come as a man?*
9. **Materialism:** The materialists see the basis and substance of all reality in matter. Everything is to be explained and understood by physical causes, and all spiritual and spiritual causes are to be eliminated. They want to proceed purely "scientifically" *neglecting most nature laws.*
10. **Mysticism:** The mystic has an exaggerated fondness for the mystical. He holds that God's revelation is not tied to the Bible, but that God can impart more truths through supernatural revelation. *Still all revelation of God points to the truth of the scriptures.*
11. **Pantheism:** Pantheism is an "all-god doctrine". God is everything and all reality is God. God is an impersonal spirit or force. God alone exists; everything that is, is only an appearance of this God. *If God is split in so many parts he is powerless and therefore not God but just a nothing.*

12. **Polytheism:** Polytheism is polytheism. Polytheists worship many gods. These are usually determined by name and number and often a special natural area is assigned to them. *If theoretically a God creates another God (the basic is already in human thinking) the father type is doomed not to be the leader at some time so why would he do it?*
13. **Romanism:** The Roman Catholic Church claims to have the ultimate authority over faith and the bible. The government of the Church of Rome is infallible and not subject to criticism. Only the leadership of the church can interpret the Bible correctly. *Still the original manuscripts of the bible are in Hebrew not Latin and still Jerusalem is the holy City that GOD has chosen, not Rome. Israel is HIS holy people Zion HIS holy mountain and Hebrew HIS holy language that HE gave to Adam.*

2.2 A source of knowledge about God

What is the source of our knowledge of God, or how can He be known? Calvin wrote, "There is an awareness of Deity within the human mind and through natural instinct." Man knows the existence of God through intuition. Wahrig defines "intuition" as: "Inspiration, immediate perception without scientific knowledge; an ability to immediately grasp intricate processes correctly." Intuitive knowledge is an inclination towards certain truths; it is what the normal, natural mind accepts as true.

Intuitively recognized truths are to be tested in three ways, since intuition is direct knowledge that precedes all acts of observation and inference.

- Are intuitive truths **universal**? Are they common to all people, and do they behave consciously or unconsciously in accordance with them?
- Are the intuitive truths **necessary**? Do they necessarily spring from the constitution of every normal person? Are they innate and inherent to him?
- Are the intuitive truths **obvious**? Evidence for yourself, and are you independent of other truths to be known?

An intuitive belief in the existence of God is probably innate in every human being, but it is not a perfect or complete idea, but rather an ability to believe when that idea is presented to the human being. In order that no man should seek refuge in ignorance, God has implanted in every man some perception of Himself. In this sense we can say that "atheism" is a myth.

Paul points to intuition in Acts 17:28: "For in him we live and weave and have our being, as some of your poets also said: for we also are his descendants."

Paul goes on to show in Romans 1:21ff that the knowledge of God has been degenerated and darkened by sin: "Because they knew God, but neither glorified him as God nor gave thanks to him, but became foolish in their reasoning and their foolish hearts was eclipsed."

2.3 evidences of God

Erich Sauer wrote:

... For the idea of God transcends all human means of thought, and the mere attempt of a dust-begotten creature even to wish to "demonstrate" God (!!) is nothing else than a childish overestimate of self, yea, the boundless presumption of small-mindedness and morbid delusion. God as God is the eternal and infinite, and as such can never be the thought-problem of human molelike speculation.^{4 ii}

While we agree with Erich Sauer, let's cite some "evidences of God" that have been advanced by humans over time.

When considering the question of the existence of God, the laws of Logic and conclusion play an important role. Contradictions and inconsistencies should be rejected and proven facts should be accepted. There is a two-fold general classification:

- The **επιχείρημα από την πλάτη** ARGUMENTUM A POSTERIORI (argument from the back) is *inductive*. This kind of reasoning deduces a principle from details; from the effect back to a cause. The "Cosmological", the "Teleological" and the "Anthropological" evidence relies on this type of reasoning.
- The **επιχείρημα από το πρώτο** ARGUMENTUM A PRIORI (The argument from the former) is *deductive*. This type of reasoning infers from principle to detail and from cause to effect. The ontological evidence is an example of the argumentum a priori.



2.3.1 The Cosmological evidence

Everything that has a beginning owes its existence to a cause that brought it about. The universe has a beginning and owes its existence to a cause sufficient for its production. This cause is of indefinite magnitude.

This argument assumes:

- Every effect has a cause.
- The effect depends on the cause (causality).
- The universe cannot have produced itself (an effect cannot contain a cause within itself).

⁴ The Dawn of World Redemption, A survey of the History of Salvation in the Old Testament by Erich Sauer, print 1937, Wuppertal: Brockhaus, 1985, PDF page. 4.

The cause of the universe must be outside of the universe and larger than the universe. The best option is an almighty, eternal God.

The cosmological argument can only prove the existence of a cause of indeterminate magnitude. Statements about this cause as a cause leave open whether it is eternal and independent or caused and dependent, whether it is intelligent or unintelligent, infinite or finite, the sole cause or one of many. This proof cannot give us any answers.

Psalm 19:1 is sometimes used for this argument: "The heavens declare the glory of God, and the vault of heaven declares the work of his hands."

2.3.2 The Teleological evidence

Purpose, order and plan in the universe require a builder. Since order and beneficial arrangement permeate the whole universe, there must exist an intelligence sufficient to bring about that order, and a will sufficient to direct that arrangement to a useful end. Random motion would not suffice as an explanation for the sophisticated organization we see in the world.

The teleological argument proves that the order and useful composition of the universe, in their harmony, presupposes the existence of an intelligence and will sufficient to produce them.

Paul's statement in Acts 14:15-17 is sometimes used as an example of this argument: "Men, why are you doing this? We, too, are men of the same sentiments as you, and proclaim to you that you should turn from these futile idols to the living God, who made heaven and earth and sea and all that is in them. He caused all nations to go in their own ways in generations past, though he did not go unwitnessed, doing good, giving you rain and fruitful times from heaven, and filling your hearts with food and gladness."

2.3.3 The Anthropological evidence

Man is a living, intelligent, and moral being that presupposes a living, intelligent, and moral Creator. Man with his morality, his intelligence, his conscience etc. must have an originator who is higher than himself. Man as a result (image) can only be traced back to a cause that has self-awareness and a moral nature, i.e. personality.

The anthropological argument assures us of the existence of a personal being who rules us in justice and is the right object of our supreme devotion, affection, love, and service.

The psalmist uses this argument in Psalm 94:9: "Should not he who fashioned the ear hear? Shall not he that formed the eye, see?" Paul uses a similar argument in Acts 17:28-29: "For in him we live and move and have our being, as some of your poets also said: for we also are his seed. Being God's race, then, we should not think that the Divine is equal to gold and silver or stone, which is a product of man's art and invention."

Paul asserts that God, like His seed, must be alive and intelligent.

2.3.4 The ontological evidence

The ontological proof is a study of the doctrine of "being" and has been presented in various ways (see Anselm of Canterbury, Descartes, Samuel Clarke, etc.). It is the argument for the existence of God derived from the abstract and necessary ideas or

conceptions of the human mind (spirit). Unlike the previous a posteriori proofs, this is an **a priori** proof. Here is a brief summary of the argument:

- Major premise: Man has an idea of a perfect being.
- Minor premise: This idea of a perfect being includes its existence.
- Conclusion: This being must exist.

A perfect being that did not exist would not be as perfect as a being that did exist; therefore this most perfect being must exist.

No "evidence of God" can prove a personal God as described to us in the Bible! But it can prove a "higher being".

3 The Revelation of GOD

„[VW] Hebrews 1:1-2 God, who at various times and in various ways spoke in times past to the fathers by the prophets, 2 has in these last days spoken to us by His Son, Whom He has appointed heir of all things, through Whom also He made the worlds; “

God has revealed himself. Christianity finds all information about God - His existence, His attributes, His plans - in His self-revelation. If God had not revealed himself, we would never have known him. God has spoken, and in many ways:

3.1 Revelation of God in Creation

God clearly revealed himself in creation. He is a god of power, wisdom and order. It is possible to perceive Him in creation. It is possible to explore the beautiful depths of nature with the mind.

The psalmist David speaks of this revelation of God in Ps 19,2-6: „[VW] Psalms 19:1 The heavens declare the glory of the Mighty God; and the firmament proclaims His handiwork. 2 Day unto day pours forth speech, and night unto night reveals knowledge. 3 There is no speech nor words where their voice is not heard. 4 Their line has gone out through all the earth and their words to the ends of the world. In them He has set a tent for the sun, 5 which comes forth like a bridegroom out from his chamber; he exults as a strong man to run a race, 6 going forth from the end of the heavens, and its circuit to the ends of it. And there is nothing hidden from its heat.“

In the New Testament, Paul shows in Romans 1:19-20 [VW], that this revelation of God in creation leaves man no excuse: „... 19 because what may be known of God is clearly recognized by them, for God has revealed it to them. 20 For ever since the creation of the world the unseen things of Him are clearly perceived, being understood by the things that are made, even His eternal power and Godhead, so that they are without excuse, ...“

But this revelation is limited! It shows that there is a God but does not allow man to see salvation; it is unable to bring man to God. Another revelation is necessary for man to attain salvation. In addition, man's ability to recognize God in nature is burdened by sin. Paul writes further in Romans 1:21 and 1:24-25: “...because they knew God, but neither glorified him as God nor gave thanks to him, but became foolish in their reasoning and

their foolish heart was darkened. Therefore God gave them up in the lusts of their hearts in uncleanness to desecrate their bodies one another, they who turned the truth of God into a lie, and worshiped and served the creature instead of the Creator, who is blessed forever. Amen.“

3.2 Revelation of God through conscience

Paul shows in Romans 2:14-15 that people (here the Gentiles who have no law compared to the Jews who have the law) have an inner knowledge of good and evil: “For if nations who have no law act according to the law by nature, so those who have no law are a law to themselves. They prove that the work of the law is written in their hearts, their conscience bearing witness and their minds accusing or apologizing to one another...” They know instinctively what is right and what is wrong. Conscience is a testimony, a revelation of God in human life.

3.3 Revelation of God in history

God's dealings with us humans in history, and especially His dealings with His people Israel, express a revelation of God. The Psalmist shows this revelation in Psalm 66:5-7: “Come and see the great works of God! Terrible is his deed towards the children of men. He turned the sea into dry land: by the river they cross on foot. We were happy to see him there. By his power he reigns forever; his eyes watch over the nations lest the rebellious arise.”

(S. a. Ps 136, 10-25.) The Bible often shows us this type of revelation (see also the events of Pharaoh and Nebuchadnezzar).

3.4 Revelation of God in HIS Word, the Bible

The Bible is not only a major source of God's revelation, it is the most complete source and in it we read of the other aspects of revelation. It gives us detailed information about God's plan of salvation and the Savior Jesus Christ. It contains everything that man needs to know for his salvation. Paul wrote in 2 Timothy 3:15, "But you continue in what you have learned and what you believe in, knowing from whom you learned it and knowing from childhood the holy scriptures, which have power to make you wise for salvation through faith which is in Christ Jesus “

In its original form, the Bible is perfect. Dr. Charles C. aptly put it in his definition of Bible inspiration: "God so supervised the human authors of the Bible during the composition of their writings that his message is verbatim in the original manuscripts."

Compared to other means of revelation, the Bible ranks highly: o The Bible includes the revelation of all other means.

- The Bible presents this revelation in its original pure form.
- The Bible provides the correct interpretation of the revelation.
- The Bible is far above revelation in nature / in humans.
- The Bible provides us with the only authentic, true picture of Yeshua the Messiah in His divine revelation.

3.5 Revelation of God in HIS son Yeshua the Messiah

The incarnation of Jesus Christ was a major revelation of God to us humans. In Hebrews 1:1-2a we read: "After God spoke in many ways and in many ways to the fathers in the prophets, at the end of these days he has spoken to us in the Son,..."

In the Gospel of John we see some aspects of God's revelation in Jesus Christ:

- o **Jesus interpreted the Father.** When we see Him, we see the Father. In John 1:18 we read: "No one has ever seen God; the only begotten Son, who is in the bosom of the Father, hath made 'him' known" (cf. John 1:14; 10:30 and 14:9)
- o **Jesus did the works of the Father.** John 5:19-20: "Then Jesus answered and said unto them, Truly, truly, I say unto you, the Son can do nothing of himself except what he sees the Father doing; for whatever he does, the son also does. For the father loves his son and shows him everything that he himself does; and he will show him greater works than these, that you may marvel."
- o **Jesus spoke the words of the Father.** John 17:8: "...for I gave them the words that you gave me, and they accepted them and truly knew that I came from you, and believed that you sent me."
- o **Through Jesus we see the power of God.** John 3:2: "He came to him by night and said to him, 'Rabbi, we know that you are a teacher who came from God, for no one can do these signs that you are doing unless God is with him.'"
- o **Through Jesus we see the wisdom of God.** John 7:46: "Never has a man spoken like this man."
- o **Through Jesus we see the glory of God.** John 1:14 "And the Word became flesh and dwelt among us, and we have beheld his glory, glory as of a Son who is begotten from the Father, full of grace and truth."
- o **In addition, Jesus reveals life.** (John 5:26: "For as the Father has life in himself, so he also gave to the Son to have life in himself") and the love of God (Rom 5:8: "God shows his love us that while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us.").

The revelation of God in Jesus Christ is complete (Col 2:9: "For in him all the fullness of the Godhead dwells bodily"), perfect (Heb 1:1-2) and final (John 14:8-9). We will know more about God when we see Jesus Christ face to face, but we will know no more than what is revealed in Him.

3.6 Special Revelation of God

Here we see divine revelation directed at specific times, for specific purposes, or to specific people:

- o **The lot** – The lot was used in some situations in the Old and New Testaments to reveal the will of God (see Leviticus 16:8-10; Numbers 26:55; Joshua 14:2; Prov. 16:33 and Acts 1:21-26).

- **the lots "light and justice" of the high priest** – (See Exodus 28:30; Numbers 27:21; Deuteronomy 33:8; 1 Sam 28:6 and Ezra 2:63)
- **Dreams** – At times, particularly in the Old Testament, God used dreams to reveal His will. Both believers and unbelievers have experienced this divine revelation (see Genesis 20:3-6; 31:11-13-24; 40-41; Dan 2 and Joel 2:28).
- **Visions** – Sometimes God has given people a special vision (see Isa 1:1;6:1; Ezek 1:3 and Dan 8).
- **Theophany** – Through an appearance of Jesus Christ, God gave messages to man (see Genesis 16:7-14; Exodus 3:2; 2 Sam. 24:16 and Zec 1:12).
- **Angel** – (see Dan 9:20-21 und Lk 2:10-11)
- **Prophets** – (see 2Sam 23:2; Sach 1:1 und Eph 3:5)
- **Wonder** – The miracles revealed the presence and power of God. They supported the messenger and his message (see John 5:36 and 20:30-31).
- **In the lives and experiences of God's children** – The believer should be a magnifying glass for the unbeliever. Through us the world should be able to see Jesus Christ. Jesus prayed for us in this sense in John 17:20-23: o “20. Not for these alone do I pray, but also for those who believe in me through their word, 21. that they may all be one, as you, Father, are in me and I in you, that they too may be one in us, so that the world believe that you sent me. 22. And the glory that you gave me, I gave them that they might be one as we are one 23. - I in them and you in me - that they might be made perfect in one, that the world may know that you sent me and loved them as you loved me.”
- (s.a. Phil 1:20: "...after my earnest expectation and hope, that in nothing I shall be ashamed, but with all boldness, as always, so also now Christ will be magnified in my body, whether through life or through death.“)

4 The Names of GOD

4.1 Introduction

„The name of YaHWeH is a strong tower; the righteous one runs into it and is safe. “ (Spr 18,10)

William Shakespeare once asked, "What is in a name?" And in the Apocrypha we read, "A name endures, though beauty wanes."

In Eastern culture, a person's name played a very different role than it does today. There is often a close relationship between a person's calling or character and his name. Let's look at the following examples:

- **Abram**: Abram means "father of many". God gave him the name Abraham ("father of a multitude"), showing what he intended for him.

- **Peter:** Jesus told Peter in John 1:42, “You are Simon the son of Jonah; your name will be Capha - which translates to stone.” Jesus showed Peter what He wanted to do with his life and how He wanted to change it.
- **Barnabas:** In Acts 4:36 it is clear that his name means "Son of Comfort". This was also an apt description of his character (see Acts 15:36-39).

There are over 600 names for God in the Bible. These many names give us additional information about His character. These names are a self-revelation because they were not invented by man, but have their origin in God.

Alfred Lord Tennyson said, "I cannot love my Lord without loving His name." The Old and New Testaments show the importance of God's names. In Psalm 8:2 we read: "LORD, our Lord, how glorious is your name on the face of the earth, who has set your glory in the heavens!" and in Joh 17,6 [VW] Jesus says:

I have manifested Your name to the men whom You gave Me out of the world. They were Yours, You gave them to Me, and they have kept Your Word.“

4.2 The meaning of the different names of God

4.2.1 El (pl: Elim) (אֱלֹהִים)

This name for God occurs 217 times in the Old Testament and expresses His strength, might or power. The divinity of God is emphasized by this Word. It is needed for:

- **GOD** – e.g. For example, in Numbers 12:13 we read: “And Moses cried out to the LORD, saying: O God [El], heal her!”
- **People** –e.g. Nebuchadnezzar in Ezek 31:11: “...I will hand them over to the Mighty One [El] of the nations. According to her ungodliness he shall deal with her; I have rejected her.“
- **Idols** – e.g. B. Exodus 15:11: “Who is like you among the gods [Elim], O LORD! Who is like you, 'so' glorious in holiness, terrible in deeds of glory, doing wonders!”
- **Angel** – e.g. in Ps 29:1: “Give to the LORD, you sons of the gods [Elim], give to the LORD glory and power!”

Hos 11:9 is a good example of this name compared to us humans: “I will not carry out the fierceness of my anger, nor will I destroy Ephraim again. For I am God [El], and not man, in your midst the Holy One: I will not burn with anger.“

4.2.2 Eloah (אֱלֹהִים)

This name for God is related to the name El and is mostly used for Israel's true God (exceptions: 2Chr 32:15; Dan 11:37,38+39 and Hab 1:11). It seems to express comfort and confidence for Israel, but fear for Israel's enemies. This name occurs 57 times in the Old Testament, 41 times in the book of Job alone.

Ps 18:32 shows that the true God of Israel is meant by this name: “For who is God [Eloah] but the LORD [YaHWeH]? And who is a rock but our God?”

4.2.3 Elohim (אֱלֹהִים)

Although the exact meaning of the word is unclear, the name likely expresses strength or power. Other expositors put more emphasis on the fear aspect or the fact that one should worship God. This word for God occurs about 2570 times in the Old Testament, 2310 times for the true God of Israel.

The name is also used for false gods. In Exodus 12:12 we read, “And I will go through the land of Egypt that night and will slay every firstborn in the land of Egypt, from man to animal. Also on all the gods [Elohim] of Egypt will I execute judgment, I the LORD” (cf. Genesis 35:24; Exodus 18:11 and 23:24). In Psalm 97:7, Job 1:6; 2:1 and 38:7 the name is also used for angels (see also Genesis 6), in Exodus 21:6 and 22:8 also for judges. Böhl writes: “But of course the individual judge and angel is never addressed with the Elohim name, but only as a whole, as a corporation they are called Elohim.” Basically, Böhl is convinced that the name Elohim describes the being of God that is to be feared absolutely:

The divine name Elohim and the requirement to fear God are related in the Holy Scriptures... We do not go too far when we claim that the idea which the divine name Elohim awakens in people has led to such a requirement of the fear of God given the occasion. In this name Elohim lies, according to the etymology, that the one so designated is an epitome of all that is to be feared... This fear is not to be thought of as a sense of fear, as a horror. The fear that is the beginning of wisdom has a beneficent calm, but not a terrible one Character... So what is meant is a feeling of holy awe, as one feels in the presence of a good ruler.⁴

Elohim is a **plural** form name; he is the plural of El or Eloah. However, the verb used with the name is then again in the singular. This plurality of Elohim is unique to Old Testament Hebrew - not found in any other Semitic language (also not in the Syrian translation the Peshitta which is the closest to Hebrew original!).

We see an illustration of this fact in Genesis 1:26: “And God [Elohim, plural] said [3. Person singular]: Let us [1. Person Plural] make man in our image, like us! They shall rule over the fish of the sea, and over the birds of the air, and over the cattle, and over all the earth, and over every creeping creature that creeps on the earth!”

This plural form is interpreted in various ways, but an important and valid observation is that it permits and supports the doctrine of the Trinity.

The name Elohim is often used in connection with the greatness of God and His great works. Here are some examples:

- **Regarding His work as Creator:** In Isaiah 45:18 we read: “For thus saith the Lord, who made the heavens - He is God [Elohim] - who formed the earth and made it - He hath it He did not create it as a wasteland, 'but' he formed it to be inhabited -: I am the LORD, and otherwise there is no 'God'!” (cf. Genesis 1:1 and Jonah 1:9)

- **Regarding His sovereignty:** In Jeremiah 32:27 we read: "Behold, I am the LORD, the God [Elohim] of all flesh! Should anything be impossible for me?" (cf. Deuteronomy 10:17; 1 Kings 20:28; Neh 2:4 and Isa 54:5)
- **Regarding His work as Savior:** In 1 Chr. 16:35 we read: "Save us, God [Elohim] of our salvation, and gather and deliver us from the Gentiles, that we may glorify your holy name, that we may boast of your praise!" (cf. Psalm 18:47)
- **Regarding His work as a judge:** In Ps 50:6 we read: "And the heavens declare his righteousness, that God [Elohim] is judge, himself." (cf. Ps 58:12)
- **Regarding His relationship to the people of Israel:** In Deuteronomy 8:14-15 we read: "... 'lest' your heart be lifted up and you forget the Lord your God [Elohim], who brought you out of the land bringing Egypt out of the house of slaves; who made you wander in the great and terrible wilderness, 'where' fiery serpents and scorpions are, in the arid land where there is no water; who brought you water out of the flint rock." (cf. Psalm 68:7; Genesis 17:8; 28:13 and Exodus 3:6)

There are some additional adjectives and words used with El. The compiled names express important attributes or works of God. These depict God as true God compared to other false idols.

4.2.4 El Eljon (אֵלֶּלְיוֹן)

The name El Eljon occurs 36 times in the Old Testament, mostly in Genesis and the Psalms. The name means 'the supreme god' or 'the strongest of the strong' and indicates the power, sovereignty and supremacy of God. El Eljon is the owner of heaven and earth. He knows no boundaries, everything falls under His dominion.

We find the first mention of this name in Genesis 14:18-22. Abraham, returning from a victory over the united kings, meets Melchizedek, king of Salem. Melchizedek is called Priest of the Most High God (El Eljon). Abraham gives him tithes of the spoils of war and is blessed by Melchizedek in the name of El Eljon. This event must have made a deep impression on Abraham - the knowledge that a pagan king was serving the supreme God. Verse 20 shows us that El Eljon was the reason for Abraham's victory.

Moses uses this name for God in his song in Deuteronomy 32. The song reminds Israel of the salvation, sovereignty, and faithfulness of God. If Israel has problems, it is not because of God, but because of their disobedience. In VV. 8 and 9 we see El Elyon's sovereignty in relation to Israel: "When the Most High [Elyon] divided the inheritance among the nations, dividing the children of men 'from one another', he determined the borders of the peoples according to the number of the children of Israel. For the portion of the LORD is his people, Jacob the measure of his inheritance." Although Isaiah 14:12-17 has to do with the king of Babylon, there is likely a parallel with

Satan. His desire is clear in verse 14: "I will ascend to the heights of the clouds, to be like the Highest [Elyon]."

The book of Daniel gives us another example of this name. Here a pagan king learned what so many people refuse to acknowledge, that the God of the Bible, the God of creation, of history, of redemption, is **El Eljon**. He is the strongest of the strong, the owner of heaven and earth.

Because God is El Eljon, He may say and do whatever He pleases. He gets to write the manual. Paul expressed the truth of this name well in Romans 9:20-21: "Yes indeed, O man, who art thou that take the word against God? Will what is formed say to the former: Why did you make me like this? Or does not the potter have power over the clay, to make one vessel for honor and another for dishonor from the same mass?"

4.2.5 El Shaddai (אֱלֹהֵי שַׁדַּי)

The name Shaddai occurs 48 times in the Old Testament, 41 times alone and 8 times together with the name El (see Genesis 17:1; 28:3; 35:11; 43:14; 48:3 ; Exodus 6:3; Job 13:3 and Ezek 10:5). The name occurs 31 times in Job alone. The name is usually translated as "the Almighty" (as does the LXX). Many think Shaddai comes from a word meaning mountain. This picture shows God standing on a mountain.

Some rabbis translate Shaddai as "the all-frugal". They suggest that the word shad derives from a Hebrew word meaning breast. If so, it could indicate that El Shaddai relates to His people like a mother relates to her child/baby. He gives life, nourishes and satisfies. El Shaddai is the god who makes fertile.

Genesis 17:1 is the first place where the name El Shaddai is used. When God (El Shaddai) appeared to Abraham, Abraham was 99 years old. 13 years had passed since Ishmael was born. Now Abraham and Sarah were too old to beget children (Genesis 17:17: "And Abraham fell on his face and laughed, and said in his heart, If a child should be born to a hundred year old, and if Sarah, ninety, give birth?") At that time, God appeared to Abraham and told him the following (17:1): "I am God Almighty [El Shaddai]. Live before me and be blameless! And I will put my covenant between me and you, and I will greatly, greatly increase you."

God promised Abraham a large posterity. This descendants are to be like "the dust of the earth" (Genesis 13:16) and like "the stars in the sky" (Genesis 15:5). Now in Genesis 17, Abraham and Sarah are not only childless, they are also unable to father children. In this situation, El Shaddai appeared and promised them that He would increase them beyond measure. God keeps His word and Isaac is born. Let's pay attention to the next five places where the name El Shaddai appears. Each passage is a reiteration of the responsibility that Israel should be fruitful and multiply (Genesis 28:3: Isaac to Jacob; Genesis 35:11: God to Jacob; Genesis 43:14: Jacob to his sons when he brought them to Joseph sent; Genesis 48:3: Jacob to Joseph). Later, God spoke to Moses in Egypt and said (Exodus 6:3): "I appeared to Abraham, Isaac and Jacob as God Almighty [El Shaddai]; but I did not make myself known to them by my name YaHWeH."

The fact that the Jews exist is proof that God is El Shaddai! Mark Twain said. "All things are mortal except the Jews, all other forces go - they remain! "

4.2.6 El Olam (אֵל עוֹלָם)

The name El Olam is rare in the Old Testament and means 'the everlasting God'. The word olam includes the meaning of indefinite continuation over all what is eternity over all its dimensions, that is space, time and matter and well even the populated world. In the Hebrew Gospel of Johanan (John 1:10), He (Yeshua) is **eternal** (olam עוֹלָם) and the **world** (olam עוֹלָם) was made by him but the **world** (olam עוֹלָם) does not recognize him.⁵

The name is used in Genesis 21:33: "And Abraham planted a tamarisk tree in Beersheba, and there called on the name of the LORD, the everlasting God [El Olam]." The word Olam emphasizes the immutability of God. In Psalm 100:5 we read:

"For the LORD is good. His grace is everlasting [Olam] / and his faithfulness from generation to generation" (cf. Psalm 103:17). The name is also used in connection with the power of God. E.g. Isa 40:28: "Didn't you know it, or didn't you hear it? An everlasting God [Elohim Olam] is the LORD, the Creator of the ends of the earth. He does not tire and does not wear out, his insight is unfathomable."

There are other names of God in combination with the name El:

4.2.7 El Roi (אֵל רֹאִי)

This name means 'the god of sight' or 'the god of sight'. The name is used by Hagar in Genesis 16:13: "Then she named the name of the Lord, who had spoken to her, 'You are a God who sees me [El Roi]! Because she said: Didn't I also look after the one who looked at me? "

4.2.8 El Rahum (אֵל-רַחוּם)

This name means 'God the Merciful'. In Deuteronomy 4:31 we read, "For a merciful God [El Rehun] is the Lord your God. He will not forsake you nor destroy you, nor forget the covenant of your fathers that he swore to them. " (Jona 4:2)

4.2.9 El Nose (אֵל נֹשֵׂא)

This name means 'God the Forgiving'. In Psalm 99:8 we read: "Lord our God, you answered them! / You were a forgiving god [El Nose] to them, / <yet> an avenger of their deeds."

4.2.10 El Hannun (אֵל-חַנּוּן)

This name means 'God the Gracious'. In Neh 9:31 we read: "But in your great mercies you did not put an end to them nor forsake them. For you are a gracious [El Hannun] and merciful God!"


4.2.11 El Kannah (אֵל קָנָא)

This name means 'God the jealous one'. In Exodus 20:5 we read, "You shall not bow down to them or serve them. For I, the Lord your God, am a jealous God [El Kannah],

⁵ Hebrew Gospels from Sepharad (Spain) Vat. Ebr. 100 https://digi.vatlib.it/view/MSS_Vat.ebr.100/

visiting the iniquity of the fathers upon the children, upon the third and fourth 'generation' of those who hate me..."

4.2.12 YaHWeH (יהוה)

YaHWeH is one of the three main names for God in the Old Testament, along with Elohim and Adonai. All other names are mainly scholarly guesses like "Yahweh" from the German scholar Gesenius in the 17th century. Those have no foundation and no evidence ever being used in a manuscript. Still the Peshitta, (that is the old Syrian translation of the Holy scriptures  from 190 A.D) puts instead of Yeshua 32 times the Name of GOD the Father YaHWeH יהוה; usually displayed in KJV Bible translation as LORD in capital letters. The Peshitta uses a short form for YaHWeH → MarYa מריה. Anyway it tells us that there, where we read LORD in our Western style Bibles normally the Name of GOD should be pronounced, so that HE comes to you and blesses you. Ex 20:24 After studying this name, let's list some of the other names of God associated with YaHWeH.

The name YaHWeH occurs approximately 6000 times in the Old Testament and is the most commonly used name for God. YaHWeH was a very personal name of God to the Jews. They did not utter this name of God.

The name comes from a root meaning "To Be There" (existence). The word means something like "I am who I will be" or "I will be the same as I am now." The name expresses the eternity of God. God has His existence in Himself. God is the cause without a cause, the source of all life. The main idea behind this name is that God is the self-existing, eternal God.

The name YaHWeH was used by Eve. We read in Genesis 4:1, "And the man knew Eve his wife, and she conceived and bare Cain; and she said: I have brought forth a man with the LORD [YaHWeH]."

The name is also found in Seth's day (cf. Genesis 4:26); in the days of Noah (cf. Genesis 9:26) and in the days of Abraham (cf. Genesis 12:8 and 15:2). But what is interesting is what God says in Exodus 6:2-3: "And God spoke to Moses, saying to him, I am YaHWeH. I appeared to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob as Almighty God; but I did not identify myself to them by my name YaHWeH." How could God say, "...I did not identify myself to them by my name YaHWeH"? Motyer writes:⁶

Revealing oneself means more in the Old Testament than the mere transmission of information. One enjoys intimate communion with a recognized one. For example, the name of God as a form of address was certainly known to the sons of Eli, but they did not know YaHWeH (see 1 Sam. 2:12; 3:7; Exodus 33:12-13). So the actual statement of Exodus 6:2-3 is: What hitherto had only the weight of a form of address now became significant as a statement about the nature of God, who bore this name, that he is the holy redeemer and judge, who always resides with his people.

The deep, full meaning of this name first revealed to Moses with the burning bush. In Exodus 2:23-25 we read, "And it came to pass during those many days that the king of

⁶ Handbuch zur Bibel, S. 157-158.

Egypt died. And the children of Israel sighed because of their work and cried out for help. And their cry for work went up to God. Then God heard their groaning, and God remembered his covenant with Abraham, Isaac and Jacob. And God looked after the children of Israel, and God cared for them.” After God revealed himself to Moses, Moses asked what to say to the Israelites if they asked him God's name. We find God's answer in Exodus 3:14-15: " And God said to Moses, I AM THAT I AM. (Ehyeh asher Ehyeh אֶהְיֶה אֲשֶׁר אֶהְיֶה). And He said, Thus you shall say to the sons of Israel, I AM (אֶהְיֶה) has sent me to you. 15 Moreover God said to Moses, Thus you shall say to the sons of Israel: Jehovah the God of your fathers, the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob, has sent me to you. [This is My eternal name](#), and this is My memorial from generation to generation.

Moses revealed the eternal, self-existent God to the people of Israel, who lived in the midst of so many false idols.

This name "YaHWeH" shows several truths about God:

- The name emphasizes the unchanging self-existence of God in himself. This is evident from the meaning of the name.
- The name assures God's presence among His people. In Exodus 3:12 we read, "Then he said, 'I will be with you. And this is the sign to you that I have sent you: when you have brought the people out of Egypt, you will serve God on this mountain.'"
- The name shows God's intimate relationship with His people and His ability to save them and fulfill His covenant with them. In Exodus 6:6 we read: Therefore say to the children of Israel: I am the LORD; I will bring you out from under the burdens of the Egyptians, deliver you from their labors, and redeem you with an outstretched arm and with great judgments."

It is YaHWeH who redeems from sin, suffering and death. Let's pay attention to the following statements:

Exodus 15:11: Who is like you among the gods, O LORD? Who is like you, 'so' glorious in holiness, terrible in deeds of glory, doing wonders!"

Psalms 103:1-4: "Bless the LORD, my soul, and all my heart, his holy name. Bless the LORD, my soul, and do not forget all his blessings! He forgives all your sins / He heals all your diseases. He who redeems your life from the pit, / who crowns you with grace and mercy." Joel 3:5a: "And it will come to pass that everyone who calls on the name of the LORD will be saved..."

Jesus claims to be YaHWeH! In an argument with the Pharisees in the Gospel of John (8:58) Jesus said that He is YaHWeH: "Jesus said unto them, Verily, verily I say unto you, before Abraham was, I am." The reaction of the Pharisees supports and shows that they understood His assertion: "They picked up stones to throw at him. But Jesus hid himself and went out of the temple." The Gospel of John shows how **powerful, holy, terrible, praiseworthy, and miraculous** Jesus is!

4.2.13 YaHWeH Zebaoth (יהוה צבאות)

The name YaHWeH Zebaoth is a **special** name for God. The names YaHWeH and Elohim are used 260 times with Zebaoth. Zebaoth is used 245 times in combination with YaHWeH and 15 times with Elohim. The word Sabaoth is a military term. The following meanings are ascribed to the name: "**the God who rules royally**", "**the almighty king**", "**the true head of the army of Israel**" and "**the Lord of hosts**".

The Word expresses the **sovereignty and omnipotence of God** over all the powers of the universe. He is the Lord of hosts.

The prophets in particular used the name Zebaoth (Isaiah: 62 times; Jeremiah: 77 times; Haggai: 14 times; Zechariah: 53 times and Malachi: 24 times). The word Zebaoth does not appear at all as the name of God in the books of Moses.

Psalms 24:7-10 clearly states the meaning of God's name: "Lift up your heads, you fools, and lift up, you everlasting gates, that the King of glory may come in! Who is this king of glory? YaHWeH, strong and mighty! YaHWeH mighty in battle! Lift up your heads, you fools, and rise up, you eternal gates, that the King of glory may come in! Who is he, this king of glory? YaHWeH Sabaoth, He is the King of Glory!"

The first mention of the name "YaHWeH Sabaoth" is found in 1Sam 1:3. 11. In 1:10 and 11 we read: "And she (Anna) was embittered in her soul, and she prayed to YaHWeH and wept greatly. And she made a vow, saying, YaHWeH Sabaoth! If you see the misery of your maid and remember me and will not forget your maid and give your maid a male offspring, I will give him to YaHWeH all the days of his life. And no razor shall come upon his head." The Lord of Hosts (YaHWeH Sabaoth) did what was humanly impossible. He showed His power over the closed body of Anna. She gave birth to a son whom God richly blessed and used in the history of Israel.

But we also find this name especially in the **time of need** in Israel. Often when Israel is surrounded by enemies, when all looks dark, when the people are in mortal danger, YaHWeH Sabaoth fights for them. Psalm 46 is a good example of this truth. In verses 7 through 12 we read, "Nations raged, kingdoms faltered. He raised his voice: the earth melted. YaHWeH Sabaoth is with us; a stronghold is the God of Jacob. Come behold the exploits of YaHWeH who spread terror on earth! War appeases to the ends of the earth, bows break and javelins smash, chariots burn with fire. Let go and know that I am God; I will be exalted among the nations, exalted on the earth. YaHWeH Sabaoth is with us; the God of Jacob is a stronghold for us." **When YaHWeH Sabaoth fights for someone, the fight suddenly becomes unequal. No matter how big the enemy's army is, it doesn't stand a chance at all!**

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God; I will be exalted among the nations, exalted on the earth. YaHWeH Sabaoth is with us; the God of Jacob is a stronghold for us.” When YaHWeH Sabaoth fights for someone, the fight suddenly becomes unequal. No matter how big the enemy's army is, it doesn't stand a chance at all!

Ein feste Burg ist unser Gott,
ein gute Wehr und Waffen.
Er hilft uns frei aus aller Not,
die uns jetzt hat betroffen.
Der alt böse Feind
mit Ernst er's jetzt meint,
groß Macht und viel List
sein grausam Rüstung ist,
auf Erd ist nicht seins gleichen.

A Mighty Fortress is our God,
A bulwark never failing:
Our helper He, amid the flood
Of mortal ills prevailing.
For still our ancient foe
Doth seek to work his woe;
His craft and power are great,
And armed with cruel hate,
On earth is not his equal.



Mit unsrer Macht ist nichts getan,
wir sind gar bald verloren;
es streit' für uns der rechte Mann,
den Gott hat selbst erkoren.
Fragst du, wer der ist?
Er heißt Jesus Christ,
der Herr Zebaoth,
und ist kein andrer Gott,
das Feld muss er behalten.

Did we in our own strength confide,
Our striving would be losing;
Were not the right Man on our side,
The Man of God's own choosing.
Dost ask who that may be?
Christ Jesus, it is he;
Lord Sabaoth is his name,
From age to age the same,
And He must win the battle.

Und wenn die Welt voll Teufel wär
und wollt uns gar verschlingen,
so fürchten wir uns nicht so sehr,
es soll uns doch gelingen.
Der Fürst dieser Welt,
wie sau'r er sich stellt,
tut er uns doch nicht;
das macht, er ist gericht':
ein Wörtlein kann ihn fällen.

And though this world, with devils filled,
Should threaten to undo us,
We will not fear, for God hath willed
His truth to triumph through us.
The Prince of Darkness grim,—
We tremble not for him;
His rage we can endure,
For lo! His doom is sure,—
One little word shall fell him.

Das Wort sie sollen lassen stahn
und kein' Dank dazu haben;
er ist bei uns wohl auf dem Plan
mit seinem Geist und Gaben.
Nehmen sie den Leib,
Gut, Ehr, Kind und Weib:
lass fahren dahin,
sie haben's kein' Gewinn,
das Reich muss uns doch bleiben.

That word above all earthly powers—
No thanks to them—abideth;
The Spirit and the gifts are ours
Through him who with us sideth.
Let goods and kindred go,
This mortal life also:
The body they may kill:
God's truth abideth still,
His kingdom is for ever.

order to properly express God's grace and provision, the name YaHWeH is combined with other words/titles. Some of these names are mentioned here.

4.2.14 YaHWeH Jireh (יְהוָה | יִרְיָה)

The name means "YaHWeH shall provide" or "YaHWeH provides". The story of Abraham and Isaac on Mount Moriah מֹרְיָה shows that God foresees everything and has made provisions. In Genesis 22:14 [VW] we read, "And Abraham called the name of the place, YaHWeH Jireh; as it is said to this day, In the Mount of YaHWeH it shall be

seen." Which is a reference to the mount Moriah **מֹרְיָה** and the salvation and the ark of the covenant. Yeshua was crucified on mount Moriah **מֹרְיָה**, outside the city walls to the north the way to Shechem.

4.2.15 YaHWeH Nissi (**יְהוָה | נִסִּי**)

The name means "YaHWeH my standard" or "YaHWeH my battle sign". After Israel defeated the Amalekites, Moses built an altar and called it "YaHWeH Nissi" (Exodus 17:15): "And Moses built an altar and called it, 'The LORD is my standard (YaHWeH Nissi)'"

4.2.16 YaHWeH Shalom (**יְהוָה שְׁלוֹמִים**)

This divine name means "YaHWeH is peace". In Judges 6:24a we read: "And Gideon built an altar to the LORD there and called it YaHWeH-Shalom."

4.2.17 YaHWeH Makkadish'hkem (**יְהוָה מְקַדְּשְׁכֶם**)

This name means 'YaHWeH is your sanctification'. In Exodus 31:13 we read:

"But you, speak to the children of Israel and tell them: Keep my sabbaths. For they are a sign between me and you for your generations, that it may be known that it is I, the LORD, who sanctify you."

4.2.18 YaHWeH Roi (**יְהוָה רֹעִי**)

YaHWeH Roi means "YaHWeH is my shepherd". We find this name in Psalm 23:1: "The LORD is my shepherd, I shall not want."

4.2.19 YaHWeH Zidkenu (**יְהוָה צְדִיקָנוּ**)

This name means 'YaHWeH our righteousness'. In Jeremiah 23:6 we read: "In his days Judah will be saved, and Israel will dwell in safety. And this will be his name by which they will call him: The LORD our righteousness."

4.2.20 YaHWeH Elohim Israel (**יְהוָה אֱלֹהֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל**)

In Judges 5:3 we read: "Hear, ye kings! Listen up, you princes! I will sing to the LORD, I will sing to him, I will play to the LORD God of Israel!"

4.2.21 Adonai (**אֲדֹנָי**)

The third main name for God in the Old Testament is the name Adonai. Of the three main names, this divine name occurs the least in the OT (about 315 times).

Adonai is the plural of the name Adon. The meaning of this name of God is "my lord", "my master" or "my owner". God is the one who has authority, who is sovereign. When used in reference to people, the name expresses absolute authority. If He is Lord, we are His servants. Someone said that there are two principles between a master and his servants:

The right of the master to expect obedience from his servants. The servant's right to receive instructions for his service.

This name is used in the following examples: Genesis 15:2; 19:2; 40:1; Exodus 21:1-10; Josh 5:14; 1Sam 1:15 and Isaiah 6:8-11. Also note the following important passages: Exodus 3-4; 1Sam 15; Acts 9:1-6.

4.2.22 Adonai YaHWeH (אֲדֹנָי יְהוִה)

This name occurs approximately 290 times in the Old Testament. Each time the rulership of God is emphasized. Genesis 15:8 is an example: "And he (Abram) said, **Lord GOD**, how shall I know that I shall possess it?" In addition to these names of God in the Old Testament, there are some important names in the New Testament, that we should mention. Again, while this is not an exhaustive list, here are some of the most important names.

4.2.23 Theos (ΘΕΟΣ)

The name Theos is most commonly used for God in the Greek translation of the New Testament. Although the name is used for false idols (Acts 12:23; 14:11; 17:23; 19:26-27; 1Cor 8:5 and 2Thess 2:4) and for Satan (2Cor 4:4), it will almost always be used for the true God of heaven. Yeshua the Messiah is called Theos/God. In John 1:18 we read: "No one has ever seen God; the only begotten son that is in the bosom of the father has made known."

4.2.24 LORD (ΚΥΡΙΟΣ)

The name LORD emphasizes authority and supremacy. The word occurs about 700 times in the New Testament, mostly from Luke (about 200 times) and Paul (about 250 times). The Word is applied to man (1 Peter 3:6) and God. Jesus was often addressed as LORD. S. E. Johnson asserts: "To a New Testament-time believer who was accustomed to reading the Old Testament, the word LORD in relation to Jesus meant His identification with the God of the Old Testament."⁷

Thomas expressed the deity of Jesus when he said in John 20:28, "My Lord and my God!"

Notice the following passages where Jesus is called "LORD":

Acts 2:36: "Let all the house of Israel now know for sure that God made this Jesus whom you crucified both LORD (ΚΥΡΙΟΣ) and Messiah."

Phil 2:9-11 **Peshitta Translated** " Because of this, God has also greatly exalted him and he has given him The Name which is greater than all names, 10 That in The Name of Yeshua, every knee shall bow, which is in Heaven and in The Earth and which is under The Earth, 11 And every tongue shall confess that Yeshua the Messiah is THE LORD JEHOVAH to the glory of God his Father." LORD in the Greek translation is here

⁷ The Interpreter's Dictionary of the Bible, Rest not known.

KΥΡΙΩΣ and the name Yehova is left out. Still early translations have a note or mark that here stands the name of the almighty.

4.2.25 Father (**ABBA ὁ ΠΑΤΗΡ**)

Although God is only called Father 15 times in the Old Testament, He is so titled 245 times in the New Testament. The name indicates an intimate relationship between us and God. In Galatians 4:6 we read, "Because you are sons, God sent the Spirit of his Son into our hearts, crying out, Abba, Father!" Paul shows that through Messiah we have access to the Father in prayer. In Ephesians 2:18 he says, "For through him we both have access to the Father through one Spirit." James shows that all good gifts come from the Father. In James 1:17 he writes:

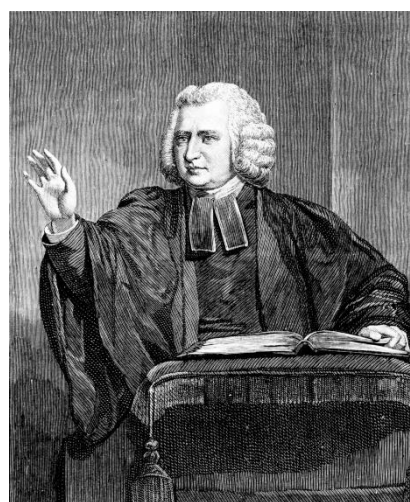
"Every good gift and every perfect gift comes down from above, from the Father of lights, with whom there is no change nor the shadow of a change." Abraham Meister writes in his book "Names of the Eternal"⁸: "The many names and titles that Revealed by God in the Bible contain a revelation of his person and character, especially his purposes with mankind⁹." David writes in Ps 8:2 and 10: "Lord our Lord, how glorious is your name of all the earth!" It is important for us believers to honor and cherish the name of God. His name is so often misused and disregarded in our day. Moses writes in Exodus 20:7:

"You shall not take the name of the LORD your God in vain, for the LORD will not leave him unpunished who takes his name in vain."

We must be careful not to conform to the world in this regard. Let us be careful not to worthily disparage the name of God and thus His person with careless phrases! At the same time, we must not forget that even a "God has shown me..." is a misuse of God's name if he has not actually shown it to us, but the matter is of our own imagination or desire!

Arise, my soul, arise;
Shake off thy guilty fears;
The bleeding Sacrifice
In my behalf appears:
Before the throne my Surety stands,
My name is written on His hands.

My God is reconciled;
His pardoning voice I hear:
He owns me for His child;
I can no longer fear:
With confidence I now draw nigh,
And "Father, Abba, Father," cry.



Charles Wesley

⁸ German Biblisches Namen Lexikon 1991 Abraham Meister, Verlag Mitternachtsruf
please use HITCHCOCK'S BIBLE NAMES DICTIONARY in [Davar](#)

⁹ Abraham Meister, *Namen des Ewigen*,

What a beautiful name

5 The Attributes of God

5.1 Introduction

Psalm 145:3 Great is the LORD and much to be praised. Its greatness is inscrutable.”

How is GOD? This question cannot be answered with a simple definition. Paul writes in Romans 11:33-36, after dealing with God's dealings with us humans: "O the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and of the knowledge of God! How inscrutable are his judgments and unsearchable his ways! For who knew the mind of the Lord, or who was his counselor? Or who gave him before, and he will be repaid? For out of him and through him and to him are all things! To him be glory forever! Amen."

Nevertheless, God revealed himself. Man can get to know Him. His attributes found in Scripture help us understand God. There has long been a debate among theologians about the relationship between the nature and attributes of God. They are often distinguished from each other.

The nature and attributes of God are not sharply differentiated in the classroom. God is a living entity. This unity is characterized by His attributes.

God's attributes represent His divine nature in His diversity. God's attributes are emanations of His essence.

No feature is inferior or lower, superior or better than another. Although there is no consensus among theologians regarding the classification of God's attributes, classifications are made over and over in the theological literature:

absolute attributes	relative attributes
they belong to God independently of His work in creation	they belong to God, but are also visible in the relationship between creator and creation
natural, not personal	moral
non-transferable	transferable

Wir wollen im Unterricht sieben absolute und sieben relative Eigenschaften Gottes betrachten.

5.2 Absolute Attributes

5.2.1 Spirituality (Simplicity)

"God is spirit, and those who worship him must worship in spirit and truth." (John 4:24)

In terms of His nature, God is "simple." It does not consist of several parts and is indivisible.

God is substance but not material; He is immaterial (Genesis 1:12; John 4:24 and Hebrews 12:9). he is ghost A spirit is independent of matter. Man cannot perceive God as Spirit with his senses. God's spirituality is also a reason for the ban on worshipping Him in images (Exodus 20:4 and Deuteronomy 4:15-24).

As a spirit, God is also invisible. If God is invisible, how do you explain the following scriptures? "Then Moses and Aaron, Nadab and Abihu, and seventy of the elders of Israel went up, and they saw the God of Israel. And under his feet it was like work in sapphire plates, and like heaven itself in clarity." (Exodus 24:9-10) and "In the year of King Uzziah's death I saw the Lord seated on a throne high and exalted, and the hemlines [of his robe] filled the temple" (Isaiah 6:1)? The answer is that God can manifest Himself in material form at any time. The invisible God cannot be seen, but "only" a revelation or appearance of the invisible God. In John 1:18 it is clearly stated that no one has ever seen God: "No one has ever seen God; the only begotten son that is in the bosom of the father has made known."

If God is Spirit, then what about the many passages in the Bible that speak of God as having human characteristics (anthropomorphisms), e.g., the fingers of God (Psalm 8:4), the ear of God

(Psalm 31:3) and the eyes of God (2Chr 16:9)? The Bible uses finite (finite) terms of sense perception to reveal the infinite. She uses a vocabulary that we can understand.

The simplicity of God also emphasizes that God is self-existent. The source of His existence is wholly and exclusively within Him and does not depend on anything outside of Himself. In John 5:26 we read: "For as the Father has life in himself, so he also gave to the Son to have life in himself." (cf. Exodus 3:14)

Although God is spirit, He is also a personality. According to older psychology, a personality consists of three parts: reason, feeling and will. God has these elements of personality:

Mind: "For my thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways my ways, says the LORD." (Isa. 55:8)

Feeling: "Thus says the LORD of hosts: I am jealous for Zion with great jealousy, and I am jealous for it with great anger." (Zech 8:2)

Will: "Our God is in the heavens; everything that pleases him he does." (Psalm 115:3)
"And all the inhabitants of the earth are counted as nothing, and according to his will he deals with the host of heaven and with the inhabitants of the earth. And there is no one who can forbid his hand and say to him: What are you doing?" (Daniel 4:32)

God made man "in his own image" (Genesis 1:27). It is possible to have personal contact and fellowship with Him through His Son Jesus Messiah.

God is not only spirit, invisible, personal and self-existent, He is also alive. In Jeremiah 10:10 we read: "The Lord is truly God. He is the living God and an everlasting King. The earth trembles at his wrath, and the nations cannot endure his wrath."

God is not only alive, but also has life in himself (John 5:26), and He is the source of life. David writes in Psalm 36:10: "For with you is the fountain of life; in your light we see the light."

John further writes in his gospel that Jesus came, that we humans "have life and have it abundantly" (John 10:10).

5.2.2 Unity

„Hear, O Israel: Jehovah our God, Jehovah is one.“ (5Mose 6,4)

שְׁמַע יִשְׂרָאֵל יְהוָה אֱלֹהֵינוּ יְהוָה אֶחָד

ECHAD YE-HOVA ELOH-ENU YE-HOVA ISRAEL SHMA ←

Unity means that there is only one God and that he is indivisible. God is one in number and uniqueness. Both the Old and New Testaments emphasizes the unity of God. In 1Cor 8:6 we read: "There is one God for us, the Father, from whom are all things, and we go to him..." (cf. Mark 12:29-30; Jn 5:44; 10:30 and Romans 3:29-30). Since He is the only God, He is entitled to man's love and faithfulness like no other being.

In theology, a distinction is made between the one or only God (the unity of the singularity) and the indivisible God (unity of simplicity).

Miracles are biblical evidence of His oneness. After Moses told of the miracles of God on His people Israel, he writes in Deuteronomy 4:35-39:

"You saw it so that you might know that the LORD is God alone. There is no one else but him. ... And because he loved your fathers and chose their descendants after them, he brought you out of Egypt with his face, with his great power, to drive out nations greater than you before you, to bring you here stronger and you to give their land as an inheritance as it is today. So recognize today and take to heart that the LORD is the only God in heaven above and on earth below, and there is no other!"

We can also see the unity of God in the prophetic statements of Scripture. In Isa 44:6-8 we read: "Thus says the LORD, the King of Israel and his Redeemer, the LORD of hosts: I am the first and I am the last, and besides me there is no god. And who is like me? He calls and proclaims and lays it out for me! – Who from primeval times made known what was to come? And let them tell us what will happen! Don't be afraid and don't tremble!

Didn't I let you hear it a long time ago and told you? And you are my witnesses: is there any god besides me? There is no rock, I know none."

Unity does not exclude the majority within Deity. The Persons of the Trinity are not separate beings within one divine being. The revelation of the Trinity affirms unity.

5.2.3 Endless

"Yes, should God really dwell on earth? Behold, the heavens and the heavens of heavens cannot contain you; how much less this house that I have built!" (1 Kings 8:27)

This attribute is a perfection of God whereby He is free from any limitation or restriction. God's infinity is in no way limited by the universe, time, space, or the world. After all, only God knows how infinite He is!

Everything in creation is finite, imperfect and measurable. God, the Creator of all things, is unlimited, perfect and immeasurable. It is beyond measurability. One cannot speak of less or more, greater or less with God. Job says it aptly in Job 11:7-10: "Can you reach the depths of God or fathom the perfection of the Almighty? Sky high they are - what can you do? - deeper than Sheol - what can you discern? Its measure is longer than the earth and broader than the sea. If he passes by and arrests and assembles for judgment, who will stop him?"

For us humans, God's infinity means that He is also incomprehensible. Nevertheless, man tries to investigate Him. Tozer writes:

Our quest to fathom the inscrutable, to see the incomprehensible, and to touch the elusive stems from our being created in the image of God. Although the soul is stained and ensnared by the great catastrophe which theologians call the fall, it feels its origin and longs for it. How can this longing be satisfied?¹⁰

The answer to this question is "Jesus Messiah!". Jesus became flesh as God and died as the God-man on behalf of us. The gift of eternal life that we human beings can have in Jesus Messiah is as unlimited as God Himself. Through our relationship with God in Messiah we participate in His infinity. But those who reject Jesus Messiah will experience the wrath of the infinite God. In John 3:36 we read: "Whoever believes in the Son has eternal life; but whoever disobeys the Son shall not see life, but the wrath of God abides upon him."

5.2.4 Eternal

„Lord, you have been our dwelling place from generation to generation. Before the mountains were born and before you created the earth and the world, you are God forever and ever.” (Psalm 90:1-2)

The quality of eternity means that God has no beginning and no end. The eternity of God is His infinity in relation to time. God has a "permanence" through endless ages and then beyond to eternity. Its existence cannot be measured by time. Frederick W. Faber wrote: "No age can burden you with years; Dear God! You are your own eternity yourself." God has always existed and He always will exist. There was nothing before Him and there will be nothing after Him.

God is eternal in nature and essence. His eternity and self-existence are closely related. God's existence is infinite and dependent on no one. He is infinitely self-existing.

Tozer writes, "If there were no word for eternity in Scripture, we would necessarily have to invent one to express a concept assumed throughout Scripture." That statement is true! The concept of eternity is part of Scripture. In Psalm 102:26-28 we read: "You founded the earth, and the heavens are the work of your hands. They will perish, but you will remain. They will all fall apart like a garment; you change them like a robe, and they are changed. But you are the same, and your years will not end" (cf. Genesis 21:33; Deuteronomy 33:27; Hab 1:12; Isa 57:13; Rom 1:20 and Rev 4:10).



¹⁰ [Aiden Wilson Tozer, *Das Wesen Gottes*: Eigenschaften Gottes und ihre Bedeutung für das Glaubensleben](#), Neuhausen-Stuttgart: Hänssler, 1985, S. 18f. **English** : [The Knowledge of the holy](#)

It is comforting to know that the eternity of God contrasts with the brevity of human life. The eternity of God gives us the hope that we too can have eternal life. "...I will give them eternal life, and they will not perish forever, and no one will take them out of my hand." (John 10:28) "In my Father's house there are many mansions. If it were not so, would I have said to you: I go to prepare a place for you? And when I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again and take you with me, so that you also may be where I am." (John 14:2-3)

5.2.5 Unchanging

Every good gift and every perfect gift comes from down above, from the Father of lights, with whom there is no change nor the shadow of change." (James 1:17) This quality of God means that He does not change. God does not grow, he always stays the same. He doesn't study and he doesn't change his plans. There is no change in God, His being, His character, His mind, His thoughts, or His will. Immutability does not mean that God is immovable, inactive, or static, but that He is not inconsistent, growing, or evolving. The immutability of God is related to His eternity. If God had a beginning, there could be a change from "nothing" to "something." If God should come to an end, there could be a change from "something" to "nothing." In Psalm 102:26-28 we read: "You once founded the earth, and the heavens are the work of your hands. They will perish, but you will remain. They will all fall apart like a garment; you change them like a robe, and they are changed. But you are the same, and your years will not end." (cf. Ps 90:2 and Ps 93:2) There are at least four areas in which God is unchanging:

- God is unchangeable in His essence. He cannot gain or lose qualities, He cannot develop positively or negatively. His attributes will never be greater or smaller, better or worse than they are now. God will never be wiser, more loving, more powerful, more holy, or more eternal than He is now. In Malachi 3:6 we read: "Nay, I, the LORD, have not changed; but you, sons of Jacob, have not ceased."
- God is immutable in His existence. The existence of God has no beginning and will have no end. John says that God and Jesus both have life within them. The writer to the Hebrews writes in Hebrews 13:8, "Jesus Messiah <is> the same yesterday, and today, and forever."
- God is immutable in His moral character. God cannot evolve positively or negatively, He cannot get better or worse. If God changed His character, it would mean a change for the better or for the worse. If He improved, that means He wasn't perfect before. If He deteriorated, that would mean He would then be less perfect.
- God is unchanging in His sovereign plan. If God were to change His plan, it would be for one of the following reasons:
 - He did not have enough knowledge to be able to foresee everything.
 - He foresaw it, but did not have sufficient power to carry out His plan.

In one of his books, Pink writes that two things in particular keep forcing us to adapt and plan anew: we cannot foresee everything that is possible in the future, and we do not have the necessary strength for all projects. If God changed His plans, He would be like a man and not God. But how do we explain verses like Jonah 3:10: "And God saw their deeds that they turned from their wicked ways. And God repented of the evil that he had

told them to do, and he did not do it.” or Jer 26:2-3: “Thus says the LORD: Come into the court of the house of the LORD and to all the cities of Judah who come to worship in the house of the Lord, speak all the words that I commanded you to speak to them; don't leave a word out! Perhaps they will hear, and everyone will turn from their wicked ways, and then I will repent of the harm I intend to do them because of the wickedness of their deeds.” The answer is: There is change and development in His relationships with us humans. However, these changed relationships between God and man do not mean that God is changing, but are the temporal effects in God's ever-existing plans. It's not like God is changing His mind. God acts in His relationship with us humans according to the current circumstances and always does the right thing! Some expositors explain these difficult passages in terms of imagery—anthropomorphism or anthropopathism. Let's pay attention to these verses:

Job 23:13: "But he who is one - who can prevent <him>? – he does what his soul desires.”

Psalms 33:10-11, "The LORD destroys the counsel of the nations, he frustrates the ideas of the peoples. The counsel of the LORD endures forever, the thoughts of his heart from generation to generation.”

Proverbs 19:21, “Many thoughts are in a man's heart; but the counsel of the LORD shall stand.”

Isaiah 14:24, "The LORD of hosts swore, saying, 'As I have planned, so it shall be, and as I have decreed, so shall it be.'"

Isaiah 46:8-11: “Remember this and remind yourselves, take it to heart, you apostates! Remember the former from primeval times, that I am God. There is no other, no god like me, who I declare from the beginning of the beginning and from of old what has not yet happened - who I say: My plan shall be established, and everything that pleases me I carry out who call the bird of prey from the east, my husband from a far country advice. Yes, I have spoken <it>, yes, I will also let it come. I formed <it>, yes, I carry it out too.”

(cf. Numbers 23:19; 1Sam 15:29 and Heb 6:17)

What about the incarnation? In John 1:14 we read, "And the Word became flesh and dwelt among us, and we have beheld his glory, glory as of an only begotten from the Father, full of grace and truth." To change or lose one's deity. Henceforth he will remain God-man. Storms writes: “He is now what He always was, truly God. He is now what He was not before, truly man. He is both now and forever, the God-Man.”

Many modern theologians believe that God is a God in the making (process theology). They believe that He is changing or evolving or that He is growing. They question the immutability of God and believe that God may be different tomorrow than what He is today.

Brunner gives a good answer to this claim:

The idea of a god in the making is a mythological gimmick. If God himself were becoming, everything would sink into the swamp of relativism. You can't measure anything with changing

standards; changing norms are not norms; a changing god is not a god that we can worship, but a mythical being that we must pity. The God of the Bible is the eternally unchanging.¹¹

This perfection of God is comfort and reassurance to believers, but at the same time a grave warning to those who reject God. Paul's words to Timothy in 2 Timothy 2:13 are fitting for believers: "if we are unfaithful - he remains faithful, for he cannot deny himself." Though friends fail, God never fails! Tozer writes:

We can come to him whenever we want and never have to wonder if he is in a good mood at that moment. He is always receptive to need and misery, as well as to faith and love. He doesn't know any set times when he doesn't want to see anyone. He never changes his mind either.¹⁴

Unbelievers should know that this quality of immutability assures them of the future judgment of God. God will keep His word and judge those who reject Him. How comforting are the words of the Lord in Rev 22:17: "And the spirit and the bride say: Come! And whoever hears it, say: Come! And whoever thirsts, come! Whoever wants it, take the water of life for free!"

O Lord! My heart is sick, sick
from these eternal changes.
And life
moves annoyingly fast
through the changes
and the restless run;
Changes do not find their equal
in you and awaken no echo in
your quiet eternity.
(Frederick W Faber)

5.2.6 Omnipresent (Everywhere there)

„...can anyone hide in hiding places and I see him not? says the LORD. Am I not the one who fills heaven and earth? says the Lord.” (Jeremiah 23:24)

This perfection of God shows His infinity in relation to space and means that God is present everywhere with His whole being and at the same time. Man can nowhere hide himself from God. The biblical support for this teaching is clear. In Psalm 139 David sat down with the

¹¹ Emil Brunner, *Die christliche Lehre von Gott*, S. 289f. ¹⁴ Tozer, *Wesen Gottes*, S. 65.

Omnipresence of God apart. In Ps 139:7-12 we read: "Where should I go from your spirit, flee to where from your face? If I climb up to heaven, you are there. When I made my bed in Sheol, behold, you are there. If I lifted up the wings of the dawn, I settled at the farthest end of the sea, there too your hand would guide me and your right hand would hold me.

And if I say: let darkness hide me, and let the light be night around me; darkness would not be darkened before you, and the night would shine like day; the darkness would be like light." (cf. Proverbs 15:3; 1 Kings

8:27 and Acts 17:27-28)

All beings of creation are spatially bound. For example, as human beings we are here and not there, or there and not here. God, and God alone, is present everywhere and at the same time. When we speak of the omnipresence of God, we do not mean that God is at work everywhere, but that He is present with His essence or being everywhere.

The omnipresence of God differs markedly from pantheism. Pantheism, or the doctrine of all Gods, teaches that "God" and "reality" are the same", that creation is "only the unfolding of its own being, its "self-interpretation". The first verse of the Bible makes clear the clear difference between God the Creator and His creation. The pantheist says: God minus the world equals "nothing". The theist means: God minus the world equals "God"!

God's omnipresence is not a spread, multiplication, or division of God. His whole being is always everywhere, not in one place more or less. Hildebert von Lavardin describes it like this:

God is above all things, below all things, outside of all things; he is within but not enclosed; outside but not excluded; he is above but not exalted; down but not depressed; he is wholly beneath all by bearing; wholly in everything by fulfilling.¹²

An important question poses the compatibility of the omnipresence of God with some Bible statements. In Psalm 33:13-14 we read: "The Lord looks down from heaven and sees all the sons of men. From the place of his throne he looks upon all the inhabitants of the earth." Further, in Proverbs 15:19, we read: "The LORD is far from the wicked, but he hears the prayer of the righteous." And in John 14:23 says Jesus: "If anyone loves me, he will keep my word, and my Father will love him, and we will come to him and make our home with him" (cf.

a. Deuteronomy 26:15; Romans 8:9; Ephesians 2:22; 3.17; Col 1:27 and Acts 2:27). It is important to understand that God is not present everywhere in the same sense, and that His presence does not have the same effect everywhere. God's presence does not work on earth as it does in heaven, nor in unbelievers as in believers. There are certain self-revelations of God at certain times for certain purposes. It is also important to recognize again that God's comings and goings are presented as a kind of imagery (anthropomorphism).

When the Bible speaks of human beings being far from God, what is meant is not a physical distance, but an ethical or spiritual distance.

¹² Hildebert von Lavardin, *A New Dictionary of Quotations*, S. 462.

When James writes in James 4:8: "Draw near to God!" he does not mean a journey, but the repentance, humility and faith of a believer.

God's omnipresence is at once a comfort and an encouragement to sanctification. Jesus says to His disciples in Matthew 28:20: "And behold, I am with you always, to the end of the age." And in Psalm 23:4 we read: "Even though I wander in the valley of the shadow of death, I fear no evil, for you are with me; ..."

Charnock sums up the encouragement to sanctification aptly:

What man would do an unworthy deed or say an ugly word in the presence of his prince? The general's eye makes the soldier stand to attention. Why did David "keep the commands of God"? Because he knew that "all his ways are open before him" (Ps. 119:168); because he was convinced that his ways were present with God. The same was the cause of Job's integrity; "does he not see my ways"? (Job 31:4). The way to be sincere is to keep God in mind; "walk before me", before my eyes, "and be godly". Communion with God mainly involves ordering our ways in the presence of Him who is invisible. This would make us spiritual, exalted and vigilant in all our passions, if we were aware that God is with us in our shops, in our closets, in our walks, in our events; as present with us as with the angels in heaven; the angels, who have His apparent, real glory in comparison to us. Yet they have no more of the real presence of God than we do.¹³

But this attribute of the omnipresence of God is also a warning for the disobedient and unbelievers. No matter what we do, we cannot flee from God (cf. Jonah 1:1-3). Charnock again:

How dreadful the thought of that quality must be for sinners! How foolish it is to think that there could be a hiding place from the incomprehensible God; the God who fills and contains all things and is present in all parts of the world. Even after people have closed the door and made everything dark to contemplate or commit a crime, they cannot find shelter from God's presence in the farthest corners. Even if they could part from their own shadow, still they could not escape His presence and hide from His sight... No thought is hidden, no lust is hidden; the eye of God sees one and the other and everything in between. He looks into our hearts when we think and watches our actions. We can shut out the sun by fleeing into darkness, but we cannot avoid God's eye always watching us."¹⁹

5.2.7 Sovereign

„Whatever is pleasing to the LORD, he does in the heavens and on the earth, in the seas and in all depths.” (Psalm 135:6)

The sovereignty of God emphasizes His position He is the supreme being of all; and His authority He has supreme power. God is in absolute control of everything. His actions are always determined by His will and pleasure and not by anything outside of Himself. Although God is sovereign over everything, He can allow some events to

¹³ Stephen Charnock, *The Existence and Attributes of God*, S. 179. ¹⁹

Charnock, *Existence*, S. 174.

happen according to natural laws. Job expresses the sovereignty of God in Job 23:13: "But he who is one - who can prevent <him>? – he does what his soul desires."

As Sovereign, God also has a plan that is all-inclusive. In Ephesians 1:11 we read, "And in him we also received an inheritance, which we were predestined according to the purpose of him that works all things according to the counsel of his will..."

It is important to distinguish that although God is the designer of the universe, he is by no means responsible for sin. God's plan allowed sin, otherwise God would not be sovereign; but He cannot be responsible for it, otherwise He would not be holy.

God's sovereign plan is not arbitrary but purposeful. Intent is a specific characteristic of a personality. Animals know no intention, no purpose. They only react to the impulse, the stimulus of the moment. God and man know intent and purpose. People often only live for the moment, but not God. He is a perfect personality. He responds to the stimulus of His eternal purpose, not just momentary purpose. In Isaiah 14:24-27 we read: "The LORD of hosts swore, saying, 'As I have planned, so it will be, and as I have decided, so it will be, that I will shatter Assyria in my land and trample it on my mountains. Then his yoke will be lifted from them, and his burden will be lifted from their shoulders. This is the decree decreed over all the earth, and this is the hand stretched out over all nations. For the LORD of hosts has decreed it. Who will void it? And his hand is stretched out. Who turns them back?'"

A major problem of sovereignty is the relation of this perfection of God to the **free will of man**. If God knows everything to come, isn't it certain that everything will happen just like that? How does God know the future? Does He know the future as a spectator (foreknowledge) or as a **causer**? Here are two often used models:

Predestination



Free Will

God ordains all things, everything is under His control. He decrees, but He does not force. An example of this teaching is the passion story of our Lord in the New Testament. We read the following in Acts 2:22-24: "Men of Israel, hear these words: Jesus the Nazarene, a man shown by God to you by mighty works and wonders and signs which God did through him in your midst did - as you yourselves know - this <man>, who was given up according to the appointed counsel and foreknowledge of

God, you struck at <the cross> and killed by the hand of lawless ones. God raised him up after ending the pangs of death, as it was not possible for him to be kept from him.”

In the passion story, Judas denied Jesus because he wanted to. The Pharisees condemned and gave up Jesus because they wanted to do it. Pilate did not release Jesus because of his personal choice. BUT, the cross was no coincidence!! God didn't just hope for the cross, He wanted it! That is why He sent Jesus: "...this <man>, who was given up by the appointed counsel and by the foreknowledge of God..."

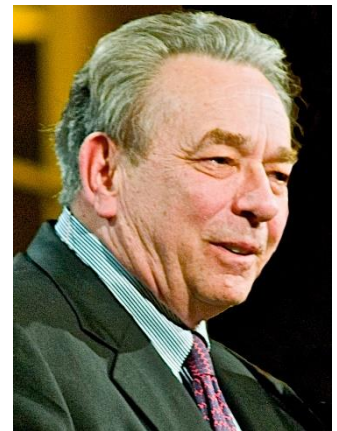
Perhaps the following statements by two well-known theologians will help us to understand this problem. Dr. **Charles Caldwell Ryrie** writes:

Sovereignty and liberty constitute an antinomy ("a contradiction between two equally true principles, or between conclusions which necessarily flow from such principles"). However, all antinomies in the Bible are only apparent, not real contradictions. We can accept and live with the truths of an antinomy by accepting by faith what we do not understand; or we try to resolve the apparent contradiction of an antinomy, in which case we will inevitably overemphasize one truth at the expense or in denial of the other. The sovereignty of God must not erase man's responsibility, and free will must never dilute the sovereignty of God.¹⁴



Dr. R. C. Sproul wrote:

God is sovereign. Man is free. But human freedom is limited by God's sovereignty. God's sovereignty is not limited by human freedom. It simply means that man is not God. God is free and man is free. But God is freer than man. Man's freedom is always and everywhere subordinate to God's freedom. If we reverse the two, we go from theism to atheism, from Christianity to humanism, from Christ to Antichrist.²¹



5.3 Relative Attributes

5.3.1 Omniscient (all knowing)

„Do you know how the clouds are balanced, those wondrous works of Him who is perfect in knowledge?“ (Job 37,16 – Voice of the Wilderness)

The omniscience of God is a perfection whereby God knows Himself and all His works perfectly; not continuously, but simultaneously. God knows everything that is real or possible. With God there are no levels of knowledge. The knowledge was not acquired

¹⁴ Charles C. Ryrie, *Die Bibel verstehen: Das Handbuch biblischer Theologie für Jedermann*, Dillenburg: Christliche Verlagsgesellschaft, 1996, S. 68f. ²¹ R. C. Sproul, *One Holy Passion*, S. 99.

or learned; He knows everything without any effort. His knowledge includes the past, present and future.

Tozer summed up this quality of God well:

God knows immediately, without exception and effortlessly, all things, all thoughts, all spirits, all beings, all creatures, all laws, all relationships, all mysteries, all enigmas, all feelings, all desires, all secrets, all thrones and kingdoms, all Personalities, everything visible and invisible in heaven and earth, motion, space, time, life, death, good and evil, heaven and hell. Because God sees all things perfectly, he knows no one better than the other, never discovers, is never surprised, and is never astonished or amazed. He seeks no information and asks no questions except to make a man confess the truth for his own good.¹⁵

One question is how God knows the future. Some expositors hold that there is no future for God, that everything has already happened with Him. Others say that God does not know the future in this sense, but that He ordained the future and knows that it will be so. His knowledge of an event as it occurs in the present is no greater than His knowledge beforehand. What God knows and how He knows is independent of time.

In summary, we can say the following about God's omniscience. His knowledge is:

- independent and non-dependent
- immediate and non-learned
- concurrent and non-sequential
- infinite and non-partial

Furthermore:

- God has neither memory nor foreknowledge.
- God cannot forget anything, so that He need not remember anything.
- God is always right in His knowledge.
- God's knowledge cannot change.

The words of David in Psalm 139:1-6 show us how well God knows us: "LORD, you have searched and known me. You know how I sit and how I get up, you understand my aspirations from afar. My walking and my lying - you test it. You are familiar with all my ways. For the word is not on my tongue - behold, Lord, thou knowest well. You surrounded me from behind and from the front, you laid your hand on me. The realization is too wonderful for me, too high: I am not able to comprehend it."

This is at once a comfort and an admonition to us. There will never be anything in a believer's life that will surprise God. Tozer again:

No one can slander us with him, no enemy can accuse us, no forgotten obscurity can suddenly be brought out of a hidden corner and humble us and expose our past. No unexpected weakness in our character can come to light and cause God to turn away from us, for he knew us before we knew him, and called us to himself in full knowledge of what was against us.¹⁶

¹⁵ Tozer, *Wesen Gottes*, S. 68.

¹⁶ Tozer, *Wesen Gottes*, S. 69.

God's omniscience is a consolation - He knows the end from the beginning: o Concerning temptation: "No temptation has gripped you but human; But God is faithful, who will not allow you to be tempted beyond your means, but will also create a way out of the temptation so that you can endure it." (1Cor 10:13)

- in relation to prayer: "But if any of you lack wisdom, let him ask God, who gives freely to all and does not blame, and it shall be given him." (James 1:5)
- in relation to suffering: "Therefore those who suffer according to the will of God should entrust their souls to a faithful Creator in doing good." (1 Peter 4:19)
- in relation to ministry: "But all things from God, who reconciled us to himself through Messiah and gave us the ministry of atonement, <namely> that God was in Messiah and reconciled the world to himself, not to them their trespasses reckoned and put in us the word of reconciliation." (2Cor 5:18-19)

Prophecy is another proof of God's omniscience. It is comfort and confidence, especially for believers. Paul shows how it gives stability in life. In 1 Corinthians 15:58 we read, "Therefore, my beloved brethren, be steadfast, immovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, knowing that your labors in the Lord are not in vain."

But this perfection of God is also an admonition to us. God knows all things and we cannot hide our sin from Him. Moses writes in Psalm 90:8, "You have put our iniquities before you, our hidden <deeds> before the light of your face." The writer to the Hebrews agrees. In Hebrews 4:12 we read, "For the word of God is living and active and sharper than any two-edged sword, penetrating even to the dividing of soul and spirit, both of the joints and the marrow, and a judge of the thoughts and intentions of the heart ."

But this quality is also a warning to unbelievers. In Proverbs 15:3 we read: "The eyes of the LORD are in every place, looking on the evil and on the good." (cf. Ps 94:3-9)

The Lord not only knows all that actually was, is, and will be, but also what could have been (see Mt 11:21-24).

5.3.2 Omnipotence (All Powerful)

Ah, Lord, Lord! Behold, you made the heavens and the earth by your great power and by your outstretched arm: nothing is impossible for you; you who show mercy to thousands and repay the iniquities of the fathers in the bosom of their children after them; Thou great, mighty God, whose name is LORD of hosts, great in counsel and mighty in deed..." (Jeremiah 32:17-19a)

This perfection of God means that God can do anything that is consistent with His nature and character. He can and does do anything He pleases; but He need not and does not do all that He can. God uses His power according to His free choice. He need exercise His power only when He commits to it.

Notice the following verses that express the omnipotence of God:

Job 9:4: "The wise man is in heart and strong in strength – who defied him and was saved?" Psalm 24:8: "Who is this king of glory? The LORD, strong and mighty! The LORD mighty in battle!"

Job 42:1-2: "And Job answered the LORD and said: I know that you are able to do all things, and that no plan is beyond your ability to carry out."

The word Almighty is used in the Bible only for God (about 56 times). In the Old and New Testaments, God—and only God—is omnipotent. In Genesis 17:1 we read, "And Abram was 99 years old, when the LORD appeared to Abram and said to him, I am God Almighty. Live before me and be blameless!"

In Rev 1:8 John writes: "I am the Alpha and the Omega, says the Lord God, who is and who was and who is to come, the Almighty."

The question is often asked whether the omnipotence of God is somehow limited. Can God really do everything? For example, could God sin? The answer is "yes" and "no". God can do anything that is in harmony with His nature! His own nature forms a limitation, e.g.: o God cannot lie. In Hebrews 6:17-18 we read: "Therefore, wanting to prove more clearly to the heirs of the promise the immutability of his purpose, God swore an oath that we might by two immutable things in which God . . cannot possibly lie, would have a strong consolation that we have taken refuge in grasping the hope that is there." oh God cannot be unfaithful. Paul writes in 2 Timothy 2:13: "...if we are unfaithful - he remains faithful, for he cannot deny himself."

- God cannot tempt people.

James writes in James 1:13:

"Let no one say, when being tempted, 'I am being tempted by God. For God cannot be tempted by evil, but he himself tempts no one.'" Although at first glance it might appear that God's nature limits His omnipotence, this is not the case. Augustine summed it up well: "God is omnipotent, but he cannot die, he cannot lie, he cannot deny himself. how is he omnipotent? He is omnipotent because he cannot do these things. If he could die, he wouldn't be omnipotent."

But God's omnipotence is also limited in the sense that He does not do all that He could have done, i.e. as above: "He need not do all that He can". For example, God did not deliver Jesus from crucifixion, He did not choose all the peoples of the Old Testament, He did not choose Esau, He did not save Stephen from stoning, He did not save the more than 6 million Jewish victims in the Third Reich, Even today, He allows wars that He could end with one word, etc.

Example: Stone

Let's look at the following examples that show the omnipotence of God:

- at creation:

Psa 33:6-9: "By the word of the LORD the heavens were made, and all their host by the breath of his mouth... For he spoke, and it came to pass; he commanded, and it stood." (cf. Genesis 1:1; Ps 19; Isa 45:12 and Rom 1:20)

- through the preservation of creation:

Col 1:17: "and he is above all, and all things are through him."

- by delivering Israel from Egypt:

Psalms 114: "When Israel came out of Egypt, the house of Jacob from among the people who spoke unintelligibly, Judah became his sanctuary, and Israel his dominion. The sea saw it and fled, the Jordan turned back.

The mountains leapt like rams, the hills like lambs. What was with you, sea, that you fled? <With> you, Jordan, that you turned back? <With> you, mountains, that you jumped like rams? <With> you, hills, <that you skipped> like lambs? Tremble before the Lord, earth, before the God of Jacob, who turned the rock into a pool of water, and the pebble rock into a fountain of water!" Translation types

- by miracles:

Acts 2:22, "Men of Israel, hear these words: Jesus the Nazarene, a man shown by God to you in mighty works, and wonders, and signs that God did through him in your midst..."

- through history:

Daniel 4:14: "By the decree of the watchmen this message came about, and this thing is a pronouncement of the saints, so that the living may know that the Most High has power over the kingdom of men and bestows it on whomever He will, and appoints the lowest of men above."

- through redemption:

Romans 1:16: "For I am not ashamed of the gospel, for it is the power of God for salvation to every believer, both Jew first and Greek."

- by preservation:

1 Peter 1:5: "...you are preserved by faith in the power of God unto salvation, ready to be revealed in the last days."

- through the resurrection of Jesus:

2 Corinthians 13:4, "For though he was crucified out of weakness, he lives on God's power..."

- through our future resurrection:

1Cor 6:14: "But God raised the Lord, and will raise us also by his power."

- by the future court:

Romans 9:22, "But if God, willing to show his wrath and to show his power, endured with much longsuffering the vessels of wrath prepared for destruction..."

- Summarized: Eph 3,20-21:

"But to him who is able to do exceedingly, exceedingly more than we ask or think, according to the power that is at work in us, to him be glory in the church and in Messiah Jesus to all generations forever and ever." Eternity! Amen." The omnipotence of God is a consolation for believers. Everything that God has promised, He will do. The Psalmist writes in Psalm 27:1, "The LORD is my light and my salvation; whom shall I fear? The Lord is the refuge of my life, before whom should I be afraid?" (cf. John 10:28-29; Rom 8:31-39 and Jud 24-25)

But this perfection is also a grave warning to all who think they can escape God's judgment! Charnock sums it up:

Wisdom and power are the basis for the respect we give people; both are infinite in God and are the foundation of the first honor that his creatures are to give him. If a man can build a wonderful machine, we give him credit for his ability; if another can defeat a strong enemy, we admire him for his power; Should not the operation of God's power in creation, in His government, in His redemption fill us with a sense of honor to His name and His perfections! We admire the princes who have great empires and many armies with which to defeat their enemies and bring peace to their citizens; how much more reason have we to give great reverence to God, who, without difficulty or trouble, by a word, by a hint, has made the great dominion of this world. How reasonable we think about the sound of thunder, the power of the sun, the storms of the sea! These things, which have no mind, impressed people so much that many worshiped them as idols. What reverence and worship this great power, together with the infinite wisdom of God, should demand of us!¹⁷

5.3.3 Justice

„Psalms 11:7 For the righteous LORD loveth righteousness; his countenance doth behold the upright..“

Righteousness has a close relationship to holiness and justice. God has an internal righteousness in relation to that what HE is and an external relation to that what HE is doing.

- regarding His internal justice: There is no law in Him or about Him that contradicts or violates His being or His nature. As the psalmist writes, "For righteous is the LORD."
- Regarding His external justice: He always acts justly or rightly towards His creation. In Psalm 145:17 we read: "The Lord is righteous in all his ways and faithful in all his works."

In Genesis 18:23-25 Abraham expresses the righteousness of God. There he speaks to God: "Do you really want to take away the just with the unjust? There may be fifty righteous within the city. Will you take them away and not forgive the place because of the fifty righteous who are in it? Far be it from you to do such a thing as to kill the just with the unjust so that the unjust might be like the just; far be it from you! Shouldn't the judge of all the earth do justice?"

¹⁷ Charnock, *Existence*, S. 429.

The word "fair" is related to the word "straight". To be just means to do what is right; or from the human side of being obedient to the law of God.

How often can we humans identify with the psalmist in Psalm 94:1-3?! There he writes: "God of vengeance, O LORD, God of vengeance, shine forth! Rise up, judge of the earth, reward the proud for their deeds! Until when shall the wicked, O LORD,... rejoice...?"

Jesus introduces the parable of the pleading widow in Lk 18:1 by saying that we "should always pray and not grow weary". Why do we humans often slack off or become weary? Because injustice affects us. It is not the penalties for sin, but the unjust suffering that is hard for us to bear. In this parable, Jesus gives us the absolute promise that the injustices of this world will be righted. The just judge will one day judge everything justly.

God's justice is rewarding and retributive (cf. Deuteronomy 28:1,15 for a good example). The righteous God will one day punish every transgression or non-fulfilment of His law. There will be retribution for all wrongs. Acts 17:31: "...because he has set a day on which he will judge the world in righteousness by a man whom he has appointed, and he has thereby proved to all that he raised him from the dead ."

The Bible clearly shows that no man is inherently righteous. Paul writes in Romans 3:10, "As it is written, 'There is no righteous man, not even one...'" (cf. Mt 5:20).

If we don't have our own righteousness, we must look elsewhere. However, Jesus Messiah fulfilled the law of God and thus attained the righteousness that applies before God. We can obtain that righteousness that God requires through faith in Jesus Messiah. We are justified and acquitted by faith in Jesus Messiah:

Romans 3:22b-26: "For there is no difference, for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God, and are justified freely by his grace, through the redemption that is in Messiah Jesus. Him God set forth as a place of atonement by believing in his blood, a proof of his righteousness in forsaking past sins under the forbearance of God; to demonstrate his righteousness at this present time, that he be righteous and justify him that believeth in Jesus."

Romans 10:4, "For the end of the law is Messiah, for everyone who believes Justice."

2Cor 5:21: "He made him to be sin for us who knew not sin, that we might become God's righteousness in him."

Expositors emphasize two kinds of divine justice. They appear in the Old and New Testaments and must be separated:

- o The transferable righteousness of God is the righteousness of God wrought at Calvary by the death of Christ, which can be bestowed on sinners (cf. Rom. 3:21-22).
- o The non-transferable righteousness of God is the righteousness of God, which as one of His attributes characterizes His character and cannot be bestowed on others (cf. Rom. 3:25-26).

Because God is just and men are unjust, justification is at the heart of Christianity. The incarnation, the cross and the empty tomb are therefore necessary. Because God is just and we are unjust, we need a Savior! God, the just judge, must punish sin. If God did not punish sin, He would not be righteous. If He wasn't righteous, He wouldn't be God. The cross shows the justice and mercy of God.

Quote: Nikolaus Ludwig Graf von Zinzendorf 17th century wrote: ¹⁸

Christ's blood and righteousness,
This is my jewelry and robe of honour,
With this I want to stand before God,
When I'll go to heaven

Christi Blut und Gerechtigkeit,
Das ist mein Schmuck und Ehrenkleid,
Damit will ich vor Gott bestehen,
Wenn ich zum Himmel werd eingehen

We can rejoice with the apostle Peter in what he wrote in 2 Peter 3:13: "But according to his promise we look for new heavens and a new earth in which righteousness dwells."

5.3.4 Love

„And we recognized and believed the love that God has for us. God is love, and whoever abides in love abides in God, and God abides in him." (1John 4:16)

The love of God is a perfection with which God shows Himself to people and through which He communicates with them. Love is much more than a feeling. It involves affection and correction. We will also consider these other words that are closely related to the love of God: goodness and kindness, mercy, patience and grace.

God's love aims to show us the sum of all divine perfections and to glorify them. If God were to keep His perfections to himself, that would be "unloving."

Let us look for the following marks of God's love:

- It is impartial: God does not love us because we have any merits or benefits. Deuteronomy 7:7-8a: "It was not because you were more than all nations that the LORD gravitated towards you and chose you - you are the least of all nations - but because of the LORD's love for you..."
- it is undeserved: God loves us voluntarily, regardless of our attitude toward Him. Romans 5:6-8 For while we were still powerless, Messiah died in due time for the ungodly. But God shows his love for us in that, while we were still sinners, Messiah died for us."
- It is the source or cause of Jesus' act of redemption: God does not love us because Messiah died for us, but Messiah died for us because God loves us. Notice what the following verses say:

¹⁸ *Ich will dir danken*, Lied 252.

John 3:16: "For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whoever believes in him should not perish but have eternal life."

Gal 2:20: "I no longer live, but Messiah lives in me; but what I now live in the flesh, I live by faith <and indeed by faith> in the Son of God, who loved me and gave himself up for me."

Eph 5:2: "And walk in love, just as the Messiah also loved us and gave himself up for us an offering and a sacrifice to God for a sweet savor."

1 John 4:9-10: "Hereby the love of God for us was revealed, that God sent his only begotten Son into the world, that we might live through him. Herein is love: not that we loved God, but that he loved us and sent his Son to be the propitiation for our sins."

- it is the reason for our acceptance as sons/children: God's love is so great that He has made us His children. 1Jn 3:1 "See what love the Father has given us, that we should be called children of God! And we are..."
 - oh she is eternal: The Lord told Jeremiah in Jeremiah 31:3 that He loved him "with an everlasting love". In Ephesians 1:4 we read, "...as he chose us in him before the foundation of the world, to be holy and blameless before him in love."
 - she is willing to chastise: chastisement is a sign of a loving
 - father's Hebrews 12:5-6, "My son, do not underestimate the discipline of the Lord, and do not grow weary when he punishes you. For whom the Lord loves he disciplines; but he strikes every son he receives."
 - it is irrevocable: There is absolutely nothing that can separate us from the love of God. Romans 8:35, 38-39: "Who will separate us from the love of Christ? affliction, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword? ...For I am persuaded that neither death nor life, neither angels nor powers, neither things present nor things to come, nor powers, neither height nor depth, nor any other creature will be able to separate us from the love of God that is in Messiah Jesus ours Mr."
 - it is incomprehensible: But Paul still prays that we can recognize this love. In Ephesians 3:18-19 we read, "...so that you may be able to fully comprehend with all the saints what is the breadth and length and height and depth, and to know the love of the Messiah that surpasses knowledge, that you may be filled." to all the fullness of God."
- There is no real love without a counterpart. The Bible speaks of at least four objects of God's love:
- God loves His eternal only begotten Son. John 3:35: "The father loves the son and has given everything into his hands."
 - God loves His people Israel. Deuteronomy 7:7-8a: "It was not because you were more than all nations that the LORD gravitated towards you and chose you - you are the least of all nations - but because of the LORD's love for you..."
 - God loves the world. John 3:16: "For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whoever believes in him should not perish but have eternal life."
 - God loves His children. John 16:27: "...for the Father himself loves you, because you have loved me and believed that I came out from God."

John shows us in his first epistle some consequences of divine love in our lives as believers:

- God's love demands return love on our part. 1 John 4:11: "Beloved, if God so loved us, we also ought to love one another."
- Our love, effected by God's love, is proof of our salvation. 1 John 3:14: "We know that we passed from death to life because we love our brothers; who does not love remains in death."
- God's love, working love in us, prepares us for the Day of Judgment. 1 John 4:17: "In this our love was made perfect, that we may have boldness on the day of judgment, for as he is, so are we in this world."

Notice some other words that express God's love for us humans. The Bible speaks of the **general goodness** or **kindness** of God. God provides for all creation and meets the needs of creatures. Let's look at the following Bible passages:

- Psa 34:9: "Taste and see that the LORD is good! Happy the man who hides with him!"
- Ps 145:15: "All eyes are waiting for you, and you will give them their food in due course."
- Ps 145:16: "You open your hand and satisfy every living thing with pleasure." o Mt 5:45: "For he makes his sun rise on the evil and on the good and sends rain on the just and on the unjust."
- Tit 3:4: "When the goodness and love of mankind of our Savior God appeared."
- In Romans 2:4 we see the real purpose of God's goodness: "Or do you despise the riches of his goodness and patience and long-suffering, not knowing that the goodness of God leads you to repentance?"

God's love can also be seen in His **patience**. He shows longsuffering for the stubbornness of sinners:

- Psa 103:8: "The LORD is merciful and gracious, slow to anger and abounding in kindness."
- 2 Peter 3:9,15: "The Lord does not delay the promise, as some think delay, but he is longsuffering toward you, not wanting any to perish, but all to come to repentance... behold the longsuffering Our Lord's salvation, just as our beloved brother Paul also wrote to you according to the wisdom given to him..."

Mercy is the aspect of God's goodness or love whereby He shows pity, compassion, or mercy. Tozer writes: "Mercy [is] the goodness of God toward human suffering and guilt... Man's misery and sin is what triggers divine mercy."¹⁹

- Eph 2:4: "But God, who is rich in mercy,..."
- James 5:11: "Behold, we call them blessed that have endured. You heard of the endurance of Job, and you saw the end of the Lord, that the Lord is tender and merciful."

¹⁹ Tozer, *Wesen Gottes*, S. 107.

- Lk 6:36: "Have mercy, just as your father is merciful!"

Grace is God's undeserved favor towards us humans; the emergence of divine love in the form of benefits to undeserving sinners. The grace of God is most evident through the redeeming work of Jesus Christ. Someone said: "With His mercy, God does not give us what we deserve; and by His grace He gives us what we do not deserve."

Notice the following aspects of God's grace:

- God offers grace to all people. Tit 2:11: "For the grace of God has appeared, bringing salvation to all men." Oh, we humans are saved by grace. Ephesians 2:8-9, "For by grace are ye saved through faith, and that not of yourselves; it is the gift of God; not of works, lest anyone should boast." o The gifts of the Spirit are an expression of the grace of God. 1 Peter 4:10, "As each has received a gift of grace, so thereby serve one another as good stewards of the varied grace of God." Oh, the sacrifice of Jesus Christ is grace. 2Cor 8:9: "For you know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, that being rich he became poor for your sakes, that through his poverty you might become rich." Oh, we are to be thankful for His grace. 2Cor 9:14b-15: "...excellent grace of God upon you. Thank God for his unspeakable gift!"

Tozer wrote:

Grace has its origin in the heart of God, in the incomprehensible depth of his holy being, but the channel through which it flows to man is the crucified and risen Jesus Messiah... Beginning with Abel, none is up to this day saved in any other way than by grace. Since mankind was expelled from the Garden of Eden, no man has been able to regain God's approval except through the pure goodness of God. Wherever grace came to a man, it was through Jesus Messiah. Grace came through him, but it did not wait for his birth in the manger or his death on the cross before it began to work. Messiah is a lamb smitten from the foundation of the world. The very first man to be restored to fellowship with God came to him through faith in Jesus. In earlier times people looked to Christ's future work of salvation, later they looked back to it. But always they came and come in faith by grace.²⁰

5.3.5 Truth

"Jesus said to him: I am the way and the truth and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me." (John 14:6)

Truth has the basic meaning "accordance with facts" and includes fidelity, accuracy and consistency. "God is truth" means that everything He has revealed about Himself is true and that He agrees with Himself. God cannot contradict himself. We can rely on God and on His Word.

The term "true" can be used in two ways:

The word can be used in relation to an object or a person, e.g., a true man, a true father, or a true scientist. Here the norm is the ideal man, father and scientist. The definition refers to true or real. God is the true God in that His nature corresponds exactly to the

²⁰ Tozer, *Wesen Gottes*, S. 110-112.

highest possible ideal of what God should be. In John 17:3 we read: "But this is eternal life, that they know you, the only true God, and whom you sent, Jesus Messiah."

The word can be used in relation to knowledge or statements about the subject, e.g., a true knowledge of man, father, or scientist. Here the norm is the real man, father or scientist. The definition refers to truthful, accurate or correct. God is the true God, in that His knowledge and His words correspond exactly to reality, to things as they are. John 17:17: "Sanctify them with the truth! Your word is truth." Achten wir auf folgende andere Bibelstellen, die Gott als den Wahrhaftigen und Sein Wort als Wahrheit darstellen:

- Tit 1:1-2: "Paul, servant of God, but an apostle of Jesus Christ, according to the faith of God's elect, and after knowing the truth according to godliness, in the hope of eternal life, the God who does not lie, promised ages ago."
- Ps 119:89-90: "Lord, your word stands forever as far as heaven can reach; your truth endures for and for. You have firmly established the earth, and it stands still."
- Romans 3:3-4: "What then? If some have been unfaithful, will their unfaithfulness undo the faithfulness of God? Far be it! Rather, let it be so: God is true, but every man is a liar, as it is written: "That you may be justified in your words, and that you may be justified in your argument." Diese Vollkommenheit Gottes hat positive und wichtige Folgen für uns Gläubige:
- Its truth guarantees that the material and moral world is founded on truth. Ps 111:7-8: "The works of his hands are truth and justice. Trustworthy are all his commandments, established forever and ever, carried out in truth and uprightness."
- His truth guarantees that God will fulfill all promises. 2Cor 1:20: "For as many promises of God as there are, in him is Yes, therefore also through him is Amen, to the glory of God through us."
- His truth is our screen and shield. Psalm 91:4 He will cover you with his wings, and you will have refuge under his wings. His truth is screen and shield."

The faithfulness of God also belongs to this perfection "truth". God Faithful means that He is firm, dependable, constant, or trustworthy. In Deuteronomy 7:9-10 we read, "Know then that the Lord your God is God, the faithful God, keeping covenant and goodness for a thousand generations to those who love him and keep his commandments, and who pays back those who hate him in the face to make them perish. He does not hesitate before those who hate him, he repays him to his face!" God's faithfulness is the guarantee of the fulfillment of all His promises and is the foundation of our future hope. This fidelity:

- guarantees us that God will fulfill His promises and warnings. Hebrews 10:23: "Let us hold fast the profession of hope unchanging - for he is faithful who promised." (cf. John 3:16,36)
- guarantees the stability of the cosmos. Psalm 119:90: Your faithfulness will last from generation to generation. You founded the earth and it stands."

- assures us of fellowship in Messiah. 1Cor 1:9: "God is faithful, by whom you were called into the fellowship of his Son Jesus Messiah our Lord."
- assures us of victory in temptations. 1Cor 10:13: "No temptation has gripped you but a human one; But God is faithful, who will not allow you to be tempted beyond your means, but will make the temptation come out so that you can endure it."
- guarantees us protection from evil. 2Thess 3,3: "But the Lord is faithful, who will strengthen you and protect you from evil."
- guarantees forgiveness and cleansing to believers. 1 John 1:9: "If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from every unrighteousness."
- guarantees us the preservation of body, soul and spirit until the day of Jesus Christ. 1Thess 5:23-24: "But the God of peace himself sanctify you completely; and complete may your spirit and soul and body be preserved blameless at the coming of our Lord Jesus Messiah! Faithful is he who calls you; he will too."

5.3.6 Freedom

"Who hath measured the Spirit of the LORD, and <who is> the man of his counsel whom he instructed? With whom did he consult, to give him understanding, and teach him the path of righteousness, and teach him knowledge, and teach him the way of understanding? Behold, nations are like a drop in a bucket and like dust on a scale. Behold, he lifts up islands like a mote." (Isaiah 40:13-14)

God is independent of His creation and His creatures. The only limitations of God are the limitations of perfection; but because there are no limitations in perfection, there are no limitations in God.

Paul writes in Romans 11:33-35: "O the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and of the knowledge of God! How inscrutable are his judgments and unsearchable his ways! For who knew the mind of the Lord, or who was his counselor? Or who gave him before, and will be repaid?" We expect a negative answer here – nobody! The reason for this is that God is free and independent of all of His creation. The consequence is that whatever God does for His creatures, He does not out of obligation, but out of His grace and because He loves them.

Another aspect of God's freedom is that some of His purposes are revealed and others are not. Moses writes in Deuteronomy 29:28: "The unseen <stands with> the LORD our God; but what is revealed is for us and our children forever, so that we may do all the words of this law."

5.3.7 Holyness

"For I am the LORD your God. So sanctify yourselves and be holy, for I am holy! And you shall not defile yourselves with all the little creatures that move on the earth."
(Leviticus 11:44)

The word "holy" in Scripture has two main meanings. It means "separate" or "separate" on the one hand and "purity" or "without moral fault" on the other. Holiness is the absence of evil and the presence of purity. God is holy. He is separate from all that is impure or evil, and positively speaking, He is all pure. God doesn't make an effort to be or remain holy, He is like that! God is holy in relation to His nature and His works. Tozer writes:

Holiness is God's way. To be holy, He doesn't conform to a standard. He himself is the standard. Its absolute sanctity is of an infinite, incomprehensible plenitude of purity, incapable of being anything other than it is. Because he is holy, all his attributes are also holy. That is, whatever we ascribe to God we must conceive of as sacred.²¹

Consider the following biblical statements:

- Leviticus 11:44: "For I am the LORD your God. So sanctify yourselves and be holy, for I am holy! And you shall not defile yourselves with all the small creatures that move on the earth."
- Ps 99:3.5.9: "Let them praise your name, the great and terrible one – it is holy! –... Exalt the LORD our God, and bow down at his footstool. Holy is he... Exalt the LORD our God, and worship at his holy mountain! For holy is the LORD our God."
- Jn 17:11: "And I am no longer in the world, and these are in the world, and I come to you. Holy Father! Keep them in your name, which you gave me, that they may be one like us!"
- Peter 1:14-16: "As children of obedience, do not adapt yourselves to the lusts that used to <rule> you in your ignorance, but just as he who called you is holy, so be holy in all your conduct. For it is written, "Be holy, for I am holy."

The absolute holiness of God means that sinners must be separated from Him. In 1John 1:5 we read: "And this is the message which we heard from him and which we are proclaiming to you: that God is light, and in him there is no darkness at all." Sin is revealed through the holy God. Only through Jesus Messiah is it possible to have a relationship with this holy God. Paul writes in Ephesians 2:13, "But now, in Messiah Jesus, you who were once far off have been drawn near through the blood of Messiah."

When we properly understand the holiness of God, we become sensitive to our own sin. We see this attitude clearly in Isaiah in Isaiah 6:5: "Then said I, Woe is me, for I am lost. For I am a man with unclean lips, and I dwell in the midst of a people with unclean lips. For my eyes have seen the King, the LORD of hosts."

Because God is holy, He wants us to be holy too. Paul writes in 1Thess 4,3: "For this is the will of God: your sanctification..." Again Tozer:

God's holiness is absolute and knows no degrees. This is something he cannot transfer to his creatures. But there is a relative and conditional holiness which He gives both to His angels and seraphim in heaven and to redeemed men on earth, by imputation and communication. Because he made it accessible to them through the blood of the Lamb, he also demands it from them. First to Israel and later to his

²¹ Tozer, *Wesen Gottes*, S. 124.

God said to the congregation: "You shall be holy, for I am holy" (Leviticus 19:2; 1 Peter 1:16). He did not say, "Be holy as I am holy," for that would be asking of us absolute holiness, which only God possesses... No honest man can say, "I am holy." But neither is a honest man willing to ignore the solemn words of the inspired writer: "Pursue peace with everyone, and sanctification without which no one shall see the Lord." (Hebrews 12:14)²²

The holiness of God is the standard or norm for our lives and conduct. John writes in 1Jn 1:7: "But if we walk in the light, as he is in the light, we have fellowship with one another, and the blood of Jesus his Son cleanses us from every sin." A messianic life should be the goal of everyone believers: "Whoever says that he will abide in him ought to walk as he walked." (1John 2:6)

Notice further that sanctification:

- Guarantees the inviolability of God's covenants. Psalm 89:35-37 I will not violate my covenant, nor change what has come out of my lips. Once I swore by my holiness - how could I deceive David! –. "His offspring shall be forever, and his throne like the sun before me..."
- revealed the character of the coming kingdom (see Isaiah 11:1-9).
- Provides the terrible background for the divine judgment. Rev 4:8: "And the four living creatures had six wings, one like the other, and are full of eyes all around and within, and day and night they never cease to say, 'Holy, holy, holy, Lord! God Almighty who was and who is and who is to come!'" In Bezug auf die Eigenschaften/Vollkommenheiten Gottes stimmen wir mit Mose in 2Mose 15,11 ein:

"Who is like you among the gods, O LORD! Who is like you, so glorious in holiness, terrible in deeds of glory, doing wonders!"

6 The Trinity of God

The Trinity is a great and sacred mystery. The phrase "trinity" does not appear in the Bible. Theophilus of Antioch uses the word "trias" and Tertullian uses the word "trinitas". Although the word is not in Scripture, we have the right to speak of it because it paraphrases biblical teaching. God is a high, sublime, perfect being that we humans cannot comprehend. We know some things about his person and existence, but not everything. Scripture helps us understand God, but a doctrine like the Trinity is a mystery ultimately incomprehensible to human beings. Someone said, "Try to explain the Trinity and you will lose your mind; try to deny the Trinity and you will lose your soul."

A typical definition of the Trinity is that of Augustine. He writes:

There is the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit, and each is God, and they are all one God at the same time; and each is a complete being and at the same time all are one being. The Father is neither the Son nor the Holy Spirit; the Son is neither the Father

²² Tozer, *Wesen Gottes*, S. 125.

nor the Holy Spirit; the Holy Spirit is neither the Father nor the Son. But the Father is uniquely the Father, the Son is uniquely the Son, and the Holy Spirit is uniquely the Holy Spirit. All three have the same eternity, the same immutability, the same majesty and the same power.²³

The Bible gives us three important statements that we must accept. These three statements are relatively clear on their own, but complex when taken together:

- Monotheism: There is only one personal eternal God. The Old and New Testaments confirm this truth. Deuteronomy 6:4, "**Hear, O Israel, the LORD is our God, the LORD alone.**" 1 Cor. 8:4: "**...then we know that there is no idol in the world, and there is no God but one.**"
- The deity of the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit: It is impossible to deny this fact. All three persons, the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit are called God and do works that only God can do. Scriptural evidence follows later.
- Trinity: In addition to the testimony of the Bible that God is one and that three persons are God at the same time, there are many texts that coin the term Trinity. Again, biblical proof will follow.

Regarding the essence of the Trinity, Haarbeck writes the following:

"The essence of the Trinity lies in the following two propositions.

1. Each Person of Deity is God in himself.

2. Each Person of the Deity is inseparable from the other two Persons of the Deity."

We must preserve the unity of God and yet explain or define the differences in deity.

Although the Old Testament emphasizes the oneness of God, there are clear indications that there are different persons in the Godhead. Already in the Old Testament we find a hint of revelation of the Trinity:

- the name Elohim: It would be wrong to say that the name Elohim proves the Trinity of God, but it is fair to say that this name permits and supports the doctrine. It is also interesting that the names "Elohim" and "YaHWeH" are used in the Old Testament for all three Persons of the Godhead.
- Plural pronouns and verbs: God speaks of himself with pronouns that are in the plural. Genesis 1:26 "**And God said, 'Let us make man in our likeness...'**" (see also Genesis 3:22; 11:7 and Isa. 6:8). He also uses plural verbs. Genesis 35:7: "**And he built an altar there and called the place El-Bethel, because God had revealed himself to him when he fled from his brother.**" (see also Genesis 1:26 and 11:7)

²³ Augustinus, *On Christian Doctrine*, S. 10.

- the angel of the Lord: Although the term "angel of the Lord" can be used for any angel (see 1 Kings 19:5,7), it is also used for God. Sometimes it is also used for God and yet distinguished from Him. Genesis 16:7-13, here verse 10 to 13:

"And the angel of the LORD said to her: I will multiply your descendants so that they cannot be numbered because of the large number. The angel of the LORD also said to her: Behold, you have conceived and will give birth to a son, You shall call his name Ishmael, for the LORD has heard your affliction. He will be a savage man, his hand against everyone, and everyone's hand against him, and he will dwell in defiance of all his brothers. And she called the name of the LORD, who said to her, 'You are a God who sees me.' For she said, 'Surely I saw behind the one who looked at me.'" (see also Genesis 18:1-21; 19:1-28 and Mal. 3:1)

- Places where God is distinguished from God: There are places where the various Persons of the Deity are distinguished from one another. Hos 1:7: *"But I will have mercy on the house of Judah, and I will help them through the LORD their God; but I will not help them with bow, sword, armor, horse, or chariot."* (See also Genesis 14:24; Isa. 48:16; 59:21; 63:9-10 and Zech. 4:8-9)

In summary, we can say that the doctrine of the Trinity is found as a seed in the Old Testament, but without the clear revelation in the New Testament it would not be clearly seen.

Although there is no unambiguously clear statement in the New Testament regarding the Trinity, there are many clear references. First, the New Testament emphasizes the unity of God. In Eph. 4:3-6 we read: *"Be careful to keep the unity of spirit in the bond of peace: one body and one spirit, even as ye are called to one hope of your calling; one Lord, one faith, one baptism; one God and Father of all, who there is above all and through all and in all."* (see also 1 Cor. 8:4-6 and James 2:19)

But there is also evidence that all three Persons of the Deity are God. Consider the following statements with biblical support:

1. Each Person of Deity is God in himself. All three are called God:

Father: Joh. 6:27: *"Create food for yourselves that is not perishable, but remains for eternal life. The Son of Man will give it to you; for upon it is the seal of God the Father."* (see also Eph. 1:3; Tit. 1:4 and Gal. 1:3)

Son: Joh. 1:18: *"No one has ever seen God; the only begotten who is God and is in the bosom of the Father has declared him to us."* (see also Hebr. 1:8 and John 20:28)

Holy Ghost: Acts 5:3-5: *"But Peter said, Ananias, why has Satan filled your heart, that you lied to the Holy Spirit and kept money for the field?... You didn't lie to people, you lied to God."* (see also 1 Cor. 12:3-5)

2. Each Person of Deity has the attributes/perfections of God:

Father:

- **invariable**: Jak. 1:17: *"Every good gift and every perfect gift comes down from above, from the Father of light, in whom there is no change, nor alternation of light and darkness."*

- **sovereign**: Eph. 1:11: *"In him were we also made heirs, predestined to be heirs according to the purpose of him who works all things according to the purpose of his will."*

- **almighty**: Rev. 19:6: *"And I heard something like a voice of a great multitude, and like a voice of great waters, and like a voice of strong thunder, saying, Hallelujah! For the Lord our God, the Almighty, has taken the kingdom."*

Sohn:

- **invariable**: Hebr. 13:8: *"Jesus Messiah the same yesterday and today and forever."*

- **almighty**: Matthew 28:18: *"And Jesus came and said to them: All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me."*

- **omniscient**: John 1:48: *"Nathanael says to him: How do you know me? Jesus answered and said to him: Before Philip called you, when you were under the fig tree, I saw you."*

Holy Ghost:

- **omniscient**: 1 Cor. 2:10-11: *"But God revealed it to us through his Spirit; for the Spirit searches all things, even the depths of the Godhead. For no man knows what is in man but the Spirit of man, which is in him is? So no one knows what is in God except the Spirit of God."*

- **forever**: Heb. 9:14: *"How much more then shall the blood of Christ, who through the eternal Spirit offered himself without blemish to God, purify our conscience from dead works to serve the living God!"*

- **sovereign**: 1 Cor. 12:11: *"The same Spirit works all this and allocates to each his own as he wills."*

3. Each Person of Deity does works that only God can do:

Father:

- **Creation**: Rev. 4:11, *"Lord our God, you are worthy to receive glory and honor and power; for you created all things, and by your will they were and were created."*

- **He has life in himself**: John 5:26: *"For as the father has life in himself, so he also gave to the son to have life in himself."*

- **He sent the Son**: John 20:21: *"As the Father sent me, so I send you."*

Son:

- **He gives eternal life**: John 10:28: *"And I give them eternal life, and they will never perish, and no one will snatch them out of my hand."*

- **He forgives sins**: Mark 2:1-12, verse 5: *"When Jesus saw their faith, he said to the paralyzed man, 'My son, your sins are forgiven.' "*

- **He judges the world**: John 5:22: *"For the Father judges no one, but has handed over all judgment to the Son."*

Holy Spirit:

- **Resurrection power**: Rom. 8:11 *"If the Spirit of Him who raised Jesus from the dead dwells in you, He who raised Messiah from the dead will also give life to your mortal bodies through His Spirit who dwells in you. "*

- **Rebirth**: John 3:5-6: *"Jesus answered: Truly, truly, I say to you: Unless someone is born of water and the Spirit, he cannot enter the kingdom of God. What is born of the flesh is is flesh; and what is born of the spirit is spirit."*

- **Inspiration of Scripture**: 2nd Pt. 1:21: *"For no prophecy was ever brought forth by human will, but men moved by the Holy Spirit spoke in the name of God."*

4. The three Persons of the Deity, while all being God, are clearly distinguished from one another. Let's pay attention to these two examples:

Lk. 1:35: *"The angel answered and said unto her, The Holy Spirit shall come upon thee, and the power of the Most High shall overshadow thee; therefore also the Holy One that is born shall be called the Son of God."*

Mt. 3:16-17: *"And when Jesus was baptized, he immediately came up out of the water. And behold, heaven was opened to him, and he saw the Spirit of God descending like a dove and coming upon him. And behold, a voice from heaven said, This is my dear Son, in whom I am well pleased."*

S.a. John 14:16,26; 15:26; Mark 1:9-11; Luke 3:21-22 and John 1:29-34.

However, the three persons of the deity are always represented as one god and not as three gods. E.g.,

- the Father and the Son are one: John 17:22: *"And the glory that you gave me have I given them, that they may be one, even as we are one."*

- the Father and the Spirit are one: 1 Cor. 3:16: *"Do you not know that you are God's temple and that the Spirit of God dwells in you?"*

- the Son and the Spirit are one: Rom. 8:9: *"But you are not carnal, but spiritual, if the Spirit of God dwells in you. But whoever does not have the Spirit of Christ is not his."*

- the father, the son and the spirit are one: John 14:16,18 and 23: *"And I will ask the father, and he will give you another comforter to be with you forever... I want you not leave you orphans; I come to you... Whoever loves me will keep my word; and my father will love him, and we will come to him and make our home with him."*

5. In summary: The Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit are not only one, they also work together:

- at the baptism of Jesus: Mt. 3:16-17
- at the coming of the spirit: John 14
- at the inspiration of the Bible: 2 Tim. 3:16; 1 John 1:1 and 2 Peter 1:21
- at creation: Genesis 1:1-2 and Col. 1:16
- at redemption: John 3:5-6.16; 10:18 and Heb. 9:14
- at sanctification: John 17:17; 1 Cor. 6:11

- in our preservation: John 10:28-29 and Eph. 4:30
- at the resurrection of Jesus: John 10:18; Acts 2:24 and Rom. 8:11

Matthew 28:19 is a good passage that makes the oneness and the threeness clear: ***"Therefore go, make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit."*** Jesus did not say in the names (plural), but in the name (singular). Nor did he say in the names of the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit (as if meaning a person of three names), but the article is repeated three times, in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. Jesus distinguishes between the three persons, but at the same time He unites them into one. Other scriptures show the relationship of the three (see Matthew 3:16-17; 2 Cor. 13:14 and Eph. 4:4-6), but no passage emphasizes the unity like Matthew 28:19

Throughout history, the Church of Jesus has often summed up the Trinity doctrine thus: God is not one and three in the same sense, but He is "one" in relation to His essence and "three" in relation to His person.

- God is one in essence
- God is three in person

It is also important to emphasize here that there is no hierarchy as to the nature or person of God. From this follows the argument that no one is more important or greater than the other persons. There is no inequality. There is some order of priority in effect on God's plan, but not in substance or persons.

6. Some problems:

1. Isn't the Messiah the only begotten Son and doesn't that mean origin or creation?
2. How can the statement in John 14:28 be explained?

3. How can God be one and three at the same time?

4. Why wasn't the Trinity fully revealed in the Old Testament?

7. Some examples of the Trinity:

1. Tree (Augustine) - root, trunk, branches
2. flower (Luther) - form, fragrance, med. Characteristic
3. Space (Gear) - length, width, height
4. Sun (Cook) - light, rainbow, heat
5. Personality (Augustine) - mind, feeling, will
6. Mathematically - equilateral triangle
7. Water (Ryrie) - water, steam, ice

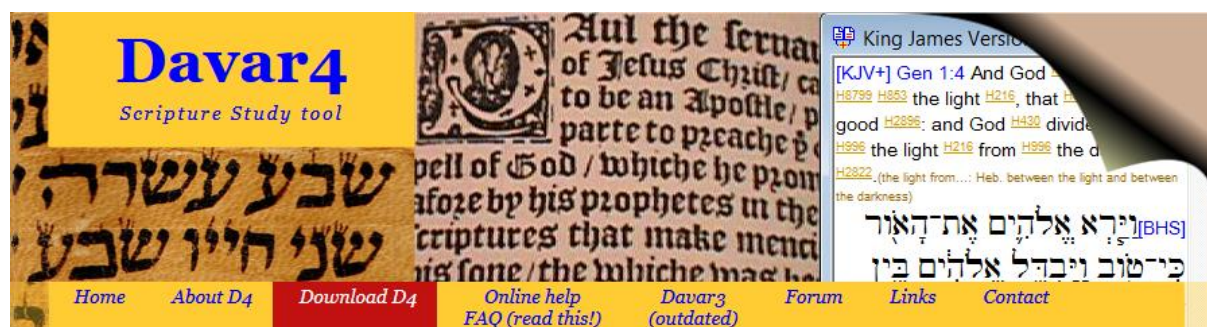
No example can solve the problem! No matter what examples we use, we must admit that the Trinity is a mystery. But the teaching is a wealth for us humans.

7 Table of sources

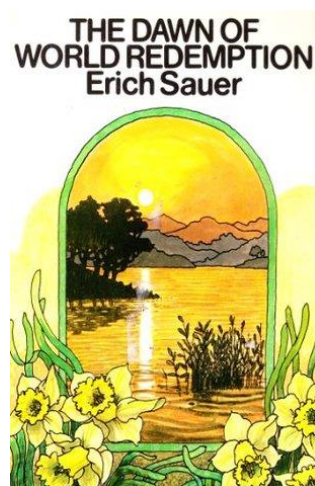
ⁱ A Voice of the Wilderness 2010

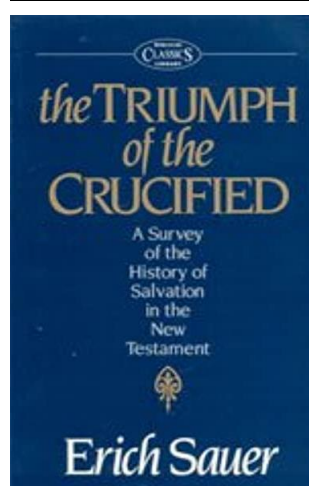
ⁱⁱ Erich Sauer, *The Dawn of World Redemption A survey of the History of Salvation in the Old Testament* Germany Wuppertal: Brockhaus, 1985, p. 17.

Recommendations

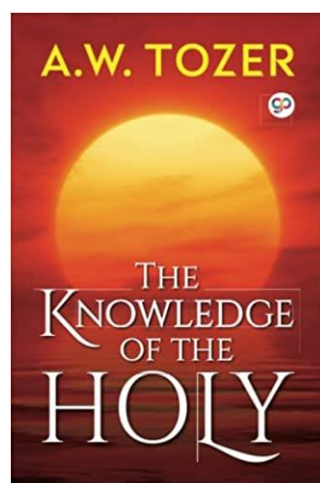


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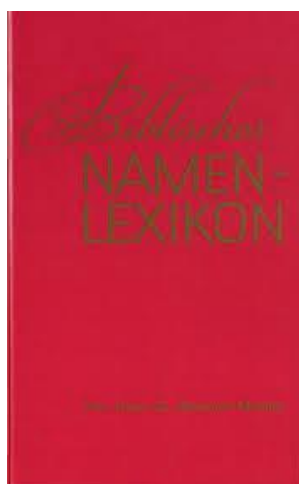
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