

The God who Lives—

The Witness of the Old Testament
(Part 4)

God Living “Inside” Israel’s History

The First Mention of the Living God--in a Place Name

Genesis 16.14 - Hagar

So the well there, between Kadesh and Bered, was called Beer Lahai Roi. (“the well of the Living One who sees me.”) [The Everyday Bible: New Century Version]

- The story of Hagar

"The barren Sarai gives Hagar to Abram “as a wife” (Gen. 16:3), making any would-be offspring a legal heir according to contemporary Mesopotamian law. Sarai comes to rue the day she manipulated such a union. Hagar, upon conceiving, scorns Sarai (Gen. 16:4), driving Sarai to abuse her in return. Hagar flees into the desert wilderness, pregnant and on foot, headed 240 km. (150 mi.) south to Shur. The angel of the Lord sends her back to Sarai with promises similar to those made to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. Her son, to be named Ishmael, would produce offspring too numerous to count (Gen. 16:10)—12 tribes which would become a great nation (17:20). [Eerdmans dictionary of the Bible (538). Grand Rapids, Mich.: W.B. Eerdmans.]

- First understood/stated by an Egyptian slave-woman!
- Why did she call YHWH 'living'? -- because of Seeing and Hearing
- First appearance of the Angel of the Lord...

God Living “Inside” Israel’s History (5)

1 Samuel 17:26 & 36 - David and Goliath

"Then David spoke to the men who were standing by him, saying, "What will be done for the man who kills this Philistine and takes away the reproach from Israel? For who is this uncircumcised Philistine, that he should taunt the armies [lit: 'battle lines'] of the living God?"

"Your servant has killed both the lion and the bear; and this uncircumcised Philistine will be like one of them, since he has taunted the armies of the living God."

- The story of the battle

God Living “Inside” Israel’s History (6)

David already knew about the dead god of Goliath

"The references to a living God in vv 26 and 36 (cf. 2 Kgs 19:4) come in a context where a foreigner has slandered Israel’s God. In Jer 10:6–10, the living God is contrasted with idols. **The giant’s attempt to curse David by his (dead) god is ineffective (v 43). Dagon, the god of the Philistines, had already been shown up as dead in the book of 1 Samuel (chap. 5)!**" [WBC]

- The Story in I Samuel 5 -- when Samuel was a young boy
- David knew the LORD lives--on the **other** end of the relationship with Saul: "*The Lord lives, and blessed be my Rock*" (2 Sam 22.47; = Ps 18)

God Living “Inside” Israel’s History (1)

Psalm 42:2 and 84.2 - The Sons of Korah

“My soul thirsts for God, for the living God; When shall I come and appear before God? (Ps 42)

“My soul longed and even yearned for the courts of the LORD; My heart and my flesh sing for joy to the living God. (Ps 84)

- The story of Korah, and his sons!
- Ps 42 -- a psalm of faith surrounded by discouragement
- Ps 84 -- a psalm of exuberance and longing for closeness to God

God Living “Inside” Israel’s History (2)

Notice how strong the pull toward life is in these psalms:

*“As a deer longs for streams of water, so does my soul **long** for you, O God. My soul **thirsts** for God, the God of **life**; when may I enter and see the face of God? [translation of 42 in WBC]*

*“My soul **yearns**—even **wastes away**—for the courts of Yahweh; my heart and my flesh **cry out** to the living God. [translation of 84 in WBC]*

- A 'Living' God is not just about power and deliverance--but our own inner lives too!
- The Bread of Life, the Living Water, the Rest for Our Souls

God Living “Inside” Israel’s History (3A)

Hosea 1:10 - Reversal of the Covenant, and the Promise of Re-Reversal

*And the LORD said to him, “Name him Jezreel; for yet a little while, and I will punish the house of Jehu for the bloodshed of Jezreel, and **I will put an end to the kingdom of the house of Israel.** “On that day I will break the bow of Israel in the valley of Jezreel.” Then she conceived again and gave birth to a daughter. And the LORD said to him, “Name her Lo-ruhamah, for I will no longer have compassion on the house of Israel, that I would ever forgive them. **“But I will have compassion on the house of Judah and deliver them by the LORD their God, and will not deliver them by bow, sword, battle, horses or horsemen.”**”*

God Living “Inside” Israel’s History (3B)

Hosea 1:10 - Reversal of the Covenant, and the Promise of Re-Reversal

*“When she had weaned Lo-ruhamah, she conceived and gave birth to a son. And the LORD said, “Name him Lo-ammi, for you are not My people and I am not your God.” Yet the number of the sons of Israel Will be like the sand of the sea, Which cannot be measured or numbered; And in the place Where it is said to them, “You are not My people,” It will be said to them, “You are the **sons of the living God.**” And the sons of Judah and the sons of Israel will be gathered together, And they will appoint for themselves one leader, And they will go up from the land, For great will be the day of Jezreel.*

God Living “Inside” Israel’s History (4)

- The Story of Hosea, in the same timeframe as Jonah (786-746)
- God's patience--the 3 year gap in verse 8
- Children of the Living God - unique to Hosea in the OT (but hearkens to Deut 14.1 and 32.19)

God Living “Inside” Israel’s History (5A)

God's faithfulness as an eternal ground of hope--even hope of change!

"In favor of the authenticity of the passage and its compatibility with Hosean authorship, we observe that Hosea often sets the most opposite ideas side by side in striking contrast. **Total despair alternates with unbounded hope. It is part of Yahweh’s sovereign power that he can completely reverse anything.** He can change “my people” into “not my people,” and he can reverse the direction too. The name and relationship can be changed back again. This is Hosea’s essential theology, and Hos 2:1–2 (or 3) predicts such a future switch in the name and status of the covenant people. [AYBC]”

God Living “Inside” Israel’s History (5B)

God's faithfulness as an eternal ground of hope--even hope of change!

"The crisis that Hosea had to interpret was **different** from any that had occurred in Israel’s previous history. **There had already been occasions in Israel’s past when God made threats that he did not carry out.** His impending judgments were staved off, either by the intervention of a prophet who made effective intercession (Genesis 18; Exodus 32; Amos 7; Psalm 106; etc.), or by repentance (1 Kings 8), or out of sheer compassion. **Not so now** (Hos 1:6): Hosea makes no intercession on behalf of Israel. The people produce no change of heart.”

God Living “Inside” Israel’s History (5C)

God's faithfulness as an eternal ground of hope--even hope of change!

“Yahweh’s hand falls; Israel is discarded (Hos 1:9). Hos 2:1–3 follows, describing the steps that Yahweh will take only after he has completed his judgment. **As such, Hos 2:1–3 lies in the future**, a more remote future than the one viewed in Hos 1:5. According to Hos 3:4–5, this “end of days” will come only after “many days.” **The scope of Hos 2:1–3 points to a future that history cannot contain; the eschatological dimension is remote, not in the sense of being far distant in time, but as something beyond historical possibility without the direct intervention of God. These remote possibilities are always at hand**, and all time perspective is lost in talking about them. They reverse history, canceling its evil, not by denying it or moving away from it into some transcendental realm. The realities of this remote future are still Israelites and Judahites. The day is the day of Jezreel. This gathering up, this salvaging of history is not its negation, but its fulfillment. [AYBC]”

- "The use of the epithet “living” affirms that God’s final word to Israel is **life** [AYBC]

God Living “Inside” Israel’s History (7A)

The story of the Assyrian delegation

“Then Rabshakeh said to them, ‘Say now to Hezekiah, ‘Thus says the great king, the king of Assyria, ‘What is this confidence that you have? You say (but they are only empty words), ‘I have counsel and strength for the war.’ Now on whom do you rely, that you have rebelled against me? ‘Now behold, you rely on the staff of this crushed reed, even on Egypt; on which if a man leans, it will go into his hand and pierce it. So is Pharaoh king of Egypt to all who rely on him.

“But if you say to me, ‘We trust in the LORD our God,’ is it not He whose high places and whose altars Hezekiah has taken away, and has said to Judah and to Jerusalem, ‘You shall worship before this altar in Jerusalem’? ... Have I now come up without the LORD’S approval against this place to destroy it? The LORD said to me, ‘Go up against this land and destroy it.’ ” ...

God Living “Inside” Israel’s History (8C)

The psychological warfare:

"After Rabshakeh had thus, as he imagined, taken away every ground of confidence from Hezekiah, he added still further, that the Assyrian king himself had also not come without Jehovah, but had been summoned by Him to effect the destruction of Judah. It is possible that some report may have reached his ears of the predictions of the prophets, who had represented the Assyrian invasion as a judgment from the Lord, and these he used for his own purposes. [Keil, C. F., & Delitzsch, F. (2002). Commentary on the Old Testament. (2 Ki 18:25). Peabody, MA: Hendrickson.]”

God Living “Inside” Israel’s History (7B)

The story of the Assyrian delegation

“Then Rabshakeh stood and cried with a loud voice in Judean, saying, “Hear the word of the great king, the king of Assyria.

“Thus says the king, ‘Do not let Hezekiah deceive you, for he will not be able to deliver you from my hand; nor let Hezekiah make you trust in the LORD, saying, “The LORD will surely deliver us, and this city will not be given into the hand of the king of Assyria.” Do not listen to Hezekiah...

“But do not listen to Hezekiah when he misleads you, saying, “The LORD will deliver us.” ‘Has any one of the gods of the nations delivered his land from the hand of the king of Assyria? ‘Where are the gods of Hamath and Arpad? Where are the gods of Sepharvaim, Hena and Ivvah? Have they delivered Samaria from my hand? ‘Who among all the gods of the lands have delivered their land from my hand, that the LORD should deliver Jerusalem from my hand?’ ”

God Living “Inside” Israel’s History (8A)

The psychological warfare:

"YHWH said to me, ‘Attack this country.’ That YHWH had called upon Sennacherib to attack Judah is not an idea necessarily drawn from the prophecies of Isaiah (e.g. Isa 10:5–6), but was an idea current in Assyrian political thought. Royal inscriptions often describe local deities abandoning their faithful to join the Assyrian side. It is not unlike Sargon’s claim that his conquest of Babylon came about as a call of Marduk to rescue the Babylonians from the illegal rule of Merodach-baladan (ARAB 2.31). Similarly, in his Babylonian inscription, Cyrus tells that he was called by Marduk “to march against his city” (cf. ANET3, 315).....”

God Living “Inside” Israel’s History (6)

2 Kings 19:4 - Hezekiah when faced with the greatest army of his day

"Perhaps the LORD your God will hear all the words of Rabshakeh, whom his master the king of Assyria has sent to reproach the living God, and will rebuke the words which the LORD your God has heard. Therefore, offer a prayer for the remnant that is left.' " [=Is 37.4]

2 Kings 19:16

“Incline Your ear, O LORD, and hear; open Your eyes, O LORD, and see; and listen to the words of Sennacherib, which he has sent to reproach the living God. [=Is 37.17]

God Living “Inside” Israel’s History (9)

- God's turn: YHWH sends His Messenger (Angel of the Lord) against the Assyrian camp
- God's response to Hezekiah: deliverance and judgment upon the reproacher
- Hezekiah as a son of David-- learning from David and Goliath (used the same words...)
- Jericho by praise; Goliath and the Philistines by a rock; Assyria by a plague and a rumor...

God Living “Inside” Israel’s History (1A)

Jeremiah 10 - a Satire on Idolatry

*“Hear the word which the LORD speaks to you, O house of Israel. Thus says the LORD, “Do not learn the way of the nations, And do not be terrified by the signs of the heavens Although the nations are terrified by them; For the customs of the peoples are delusion; Because it is wood cut from the forest, The work of the hands of a craftsman with a cutting tool. “They decorate it with silver and with gold; They fasten it with nails and with hammers So that it will not totter. “Like a scarecrow in a cucumber field are they, And they cannot speak; They must be carried, Because they cannot walk! Do not fear them, **For they can do no harm, Nor can they do any good.**” There is none like You, O LORD; You are great, and great is Your name in might. Who would not fear You, O King of the nations? Indeed it is Your due! For among all the wise men of the nations And in all their kingdoms, **There is none like You.***

God Living “Inside” Israel’s History (3A)

The blindness of following self-created and lifeless gods...

"The **immobility** of the completed idol is now described under two images. It is like an immobile and speechless **scarecrow in a patch of cucumbers**. It has to be **carried about** because it lacks even the power to move from one place to another. ... Here is powerful irony. Idol-worship tried to capture in material objects what is a spiritual experience. As a result it encouraged the absurd practice of people venerating their own impotent creations. Jeremiah’s appeal to the people here is not to fear such lifeless inventions, which can do neither good nor evil. (6–7) In contrast to the idols stands the supremacy of Yahweh. Having made the contrast in these two verses with the picture in vv. 2–5, Jeremiah returns to ridicule in vv. 8–9.”

God Living “Inside” Israel’s History (1B)

Jeremiah 10 - a Satire on Idolatry

*“But they are altogether stupid and foolish In their discipline of delusion—their idol is wood! Beaten silver is brought from Tarshish, And gold from Uphaz, The work of a craftsman and of the hands of a goldsmith; Violet and purple are their clothing; They are all the work of skilled men. **But the LORD is the true God; He is the living God and the everlasting King. At His wrath the earth quakes, And the nations cannot endure His indignation.** Thus you shall say to them, “The gods that did not make the heavens and the earth will perish from the earth and from under the heavens.” It is He who made the earth by His power, Who established the world by His wisdom; And by His understanding He has stretched out the heavens.*

- The Story of Jeremiah at the point of the Exile...

God Living “Inside” Israel’s History (2)

Remembering Isaiah and Hezekiah's experience...

"The greater portion of this section is devoted to a condemnation of idolatry. **It is reminiscent of Isaiah 40:18–20; 41:7; 44:9–20; 46:5–7**, other classic passages on the emptiness of idolatry. Jeremiah shows his **firsthand knowledge of idol worship, both Canaanite and Babylonian**. Scholars generally hold that this passage was meant to dissuade Judah from idolatry in view of her removal from her country to Babylon. This, however, is only partially true because the people were already worshiping idols while in their own land. ... Once men lose their awareness of God, they do not thereby lose their need of God. So they substitute the false worship for the true. Idolatry is the result. [EBC]"

God Living “Inside” Israel’s History (3B)

The blindness of following self-created and lifeless gods...

“... The incomparability of Yahweh is a theme that is writ large in the OT. He is incomparable, great in himself and great in his name (or character). Whereas idols derive their status and authority solely from human sources, Yahweh derives his position and authority from himself alone. He stands unique.[NICOT]

"In contrast to the idols, the Lord is the “living” God, the everlasting King. **The idol-gods can only shake the earth by falling over, but they are prevented from falling by being nailed down.** The earth, however, shakes at the wrath of the Lord, and the nations shake at his anger." [WBC]"

God Living “Inside” Israel’s History (4)

Remembering the roots--the incomparable Yahweh

"The twin themes of debunking other gods and affirming the **incomparability** of Yahweh are **old, appearing already in the Song of the Sea (Exod 15:11)** and in the **later but still old Song of Moses (Deut 32:39)**. These themes continue unabated in the sermons of Deuteronomy (Deut 3:24; 4:7, 32–39) and in the “Deuteronomic” prayers of David and Solomon so-called (2 Sam 7:22–23; 1 Kgs 8:23)..." [AYBC]"

God Living “Inside” Israel’s History (5)

Jeremiah 23:36 - Jeremiah and the subversion of God's word

“For you will no longer remember the oracle of the LORD, because every man’s own word will become the oracle, and you have perverted the words of the living God, the LORD of hosts, our God.”

- The story of Jeremiah and the impostor prophets

God Living “Inside” Israel’s History (6)

The fountain of living water--the source of life (Gen 1-2)

*“For My people have committed two evils:
They have forsaken Me, the **fountain of living waters**,
To hew for themselves cisterns, broken cisterns that can hold no water.
(Jer 2.13)*

*“O LORD, the hope of Israel, all who forsake You will be put to shame.
Those who turn away on earth will be written down (or 'in the earth'),
Because they have forsaken the **fountain of living water**, even the
LORD. [Jer 17.13]*

God Living “Inside” Israel’s History (8)

Daniel 6:20/26 - A faithful reader of Jeremiah!

*“When he had come near the den to Daniel, he cried out with a troubled voice. The king spoke and said to Daniel, “Daniel, servant of the **living God**, has your God, whom you constantly serve, been able to deliver you from the lions?” ... “I make a decree that in all the dominion of my kingdom men are to fear and tremble before the God of Daniel; For He is **the living God** and enduring forever, And His kingdom is one which will not be destroyed, And His dominion will be forever.*

- The story of Daniel, Darius, and the Lion's Den
- Daniel had identified where HIS allegiance was!

God Living “Inside” Israel’s History (9B)

Living is more than just breathing...

"... Darius is unable to eat, relax, or sleep as he awaits the outcome of the action forced on him. Perhaps he is even praying against the effectiveness of his action (Plüger) or expressing his penitence for his foolish injunction (Delcor); perhaps we are to recall the Babylonian custom whereby a prisoner who was tortured but survived overnight was then pardoned (Lacocque). When daylight comes, he returns to the lion pit in turmoil and trepidation instead of in the stately dignity and composure of a monarch. By addressing Daniel to ask whether he has survived the ordeal, he builds up our expectation that actually he has."

God Living “Inside” Israel’s History (9C)

Living is more than just breathing...

“By enquiring whether the “living God” has been able to preserve Daniel, he speaks of that God in terms that contain the seeds of the answer to his question. **This rich OT title for God suggests not merely that God is alive rather than dead, but that he is active and powerful, awesome and almighty, involved in bringing judgment and blessing. It is appealed to when human beings are inclined to slight him or to doubt him in situations of pressure and weakness (Deut 5:26; Josh 3:10; 1 Sam 17:26; 2 Kgs 19:4; Jer 10:10; 23:36; Hos 2:1 [1:10]; Ps 42:3 [2]; 84:3 [2]; oaths are taken “by the living God”—i.e., at the risk of his intervening in case of default!).** Darius’s confession of “the living God” thus also builds up our expectation regarding what we are about to discover. ... Daniel’s calm and polite reply, observing courtly protocol, underlines by contrast the king’s anxiety and agitation.”

God Living “Inside” Israel’s History (9D)

Living is more than just breathing...

“At the same time his “Long live the king” strikingly affirms Darius’s kingship. It is the first time the phrase has occurred on the lips of Daniel or his friends (cf. Neh 2:3). If to be the living God implies activity and power, to be the living king implies having a share in God’s life and power (cf. P. A. H. de Boer, “Vive le roi!” VT 5 [1955] 225–31). Daniel’s prayer that Darius may do so both honors and relativizes Darius’s kingship by the interweaving of references to the living God with those to the living king (vv 7, 21, 22, 27 [6, 20, 21, 26]), as have his earlier affirmations of Nebuchadnezzar’s kingship as God-given (2:37; 5:18). [WBC]”

God Living “Inside” Israel’s History (10B)

"A man under authority..."

"Something similar happens when Darius testifies to God as the living God who endures for ever. Daniel has just greeted him with that standard wish “Long live the king” (literally, “May the king live forever”): the courtly homage is relativized by the royal confession itself. To be living is to be active and powerful: the living God is enthroned as King forever (Ps 10:16; 29:10), and he can therefore also be his people’s savior. [WBC]”

God Living “Inside” Israel’s History (11)

An encouragement to His exiled people

"The poems of the book of Daniel, whether expressed by Daniel (2:20–23) or by kings (4:3, 34–35, 37; 6:26–27), emphasize the greatness of God. There is no emperor so great that he is not under the control of the living God. **To be deported to a strange land raised questions in the minds of Israelite exiles about the power of their God (11:32).** In their testing, they needed reassurance. **Darius’s letter announces the climactic revelation about the God of Israel: This God is the living God! Because this God is living, he can reveal mysteries, humble arrogant rulers, and deliver the faithful.** The Most High God is the living God. [Lederach, P. M. (1994). Daniel. Believers church Bible commentary (142–144). Scottdale, Pa.: Herald Press.]”

- "I believed--therefore I have spoken"

The Life that God Lives

A Life that includes joy and pleasure

A Life that includes joy and pleasure (1)

*“The LORD’s **delight** is in those who fear him, those who put their hope in his unfailing love. (Ps 147:11).*

*“For the LORD **delights** in his people; he crowns the humble with victory. (Ps 149:4).*

*“When people’s lives **please** the LORD, even their enemies are at peace with them. (Pr 16:7).*

A Life that includes joy and pleasure (2)

*“It will no longer be said to you, “Forsaken,” Nor to your land will it any longer be said, “Desolate”; But you will be called, “My **delight** is in her,” And your land, “Married”; For the LORD **delights** in you, And to Him your land will be married. For as a young man marries a virgin, So your sons will marry you; And as the bridegroom rejoices over the bride, So your God will **rejoice** over you. (Is 62.4f)*

"gil" denotes a **spontaneous, vocal outburst of rejoicing**, as seen esp. in Isa 49:13, which juxtaposes *gil* with **shout for joy and burst into song** (cf. Isa 35:2). ... The juxtaposition of *gil* with **heart and soul** indicates the depth of this rejoicing. [NIDOTTE, s.v. 'gil']”

A Life that includes joy and pleasure (3A)

Zephaniah 3:17 --"the John 3.16 of the OT"

“The LORD your God is in your midst, A victorious warrior. He will exult over you with joy, He will be quiet in His love, He will rejoice over you with shouts of joy. (Zep 3:17).

"Now the prophet moves into the “holy of holies” by a rapturous description of the love of God for his people. **This verse is the John 3:16 of the OT. ... The love of God for his own people is not a soft, sentimental emotion that has no strength to act on behalf of its object.** For this God who loves is Yahweh. He is God. He is a mighty hero who saves. The term for mighty hero (gibbôr) frequently refers to a warrior who overpowers his enemies. The Lord goes forth as a “warrior” who marches against his foes (Isa. 42:13)...”

A Life that includes joy and pleasure (3B)

Zephaniah 3:17 --"the John 3.16 of the OT"

“As the God of Gods, the Lord of Lords, the mighty God, the “hero,” he defends the orphan, the widow, and the alien (Deut. 10:17). ... This mighty hero is in the midst of his own people with power to save. Many calamities may befall Israel because of their sin against the Lord. But in the end he shall show his power to save from every enemy. His love acts concretely to deliver his people. ... **The next portion of this verse may be called a “poem of personal love.”** Three parallel lines each containing three phrases **express the deepest inner joy and satisfaction of God himself in his love for his people...**”

A Life that includes joy and pleasure (3C)

Zephaniah 3:17 --"the John 3.16 of the OT"

“Delight, joy, rejoicing, and singing on God’s part underscore the mutuality of emotional experience felt by God and the redeemed. ... That Almighty God should derive delight from his own creation is significant in itself. But that the Holy One should experience ecstasy over the sinner is incomprehensible.”

'God breaking out in singing!
God joyful with delight!
All because of you.'

A Life that includes joy and pleasure (3D)

Zephaniah 3:17 --"the John 3.16 of the OT"

"The mutuality of the loving response of Redeemer and redeemed is seen in the fact that some of the same terms used in the admonition to his people now describe the response of God himself to his people (cf. vv. 14 and 17). **Zion is exhorted to sing (*rānnî*); he rejoices with singing (*rinnāh*). Jerusalem shall rejoice (*śimtî*); he delights over Jerusalem with joy (*śimṭāh*). The whole scene depicts a grand oratorio as God and his people mutually rejoice in their love for one another.**

..... Almighty God, quiet in his love. God the mighty savior, quietly contemplating, contented in his love for you. ... If the prophet's mode of expression appears excessive, it must be remembered that God in his very essence is love (cf. 1 John 4:8). [NICOT, Zeph 3.17]"

A Life that includes joy and pleasure (3E)

Zephaniah 3:17 --"the John 3.16 of the OT"

"Verses 16–17 unfold before us **how the Lord himself rejoices**. He adopts his people's joy and rejoices together with them. So decisive is this event that has come to pass in Israel's midst that **God himself, the author of joy, rejoices with those who now rejoice**. Once again we meet with a decisive anthropomorphic picture, that of a bridegroom in love (cf. Isa. 62:5). **With a heart overflowing with joy he keeps silence alongside his betrothed, because they understand each other even without any words**. This is a moving way of describing true and undisturbed communion.

A Life that includes affectionate love

A Life that includes affectionate love (1)

Three kinds of OT Love: **chesed** (loyal love), **chashak** (attachment, passionate devotion) and **ahab** (affectionate love)

All three words:

*“The LORD did not set His love (**chashak**) on you nor choose you because you were more in number than any of the peoples, for you were the fewest of all peoples, but because the LORD loved (**ahab**) you and kept the oath which He swore to your forefathers, the LORD brought you out by a mighty hand and redeemed you from the house of slavery, from the hand of Pharaoh king of Egypt. “Know therefore that the LORD your God, He is God, the faithful God, who keeps His covenant and His lovingkindness (**chesed**) to a thousandth generation with those who love Him and keep His commandments; (Dt 7.7-9)*

A Life that includes affectionate love (2A)

Ahab/ahav:

*“Blessed be the LORD your God who delighted in you to set you on the throne of Israel; because the LORD loved (**ahab**) Israel forever, therefore He made you king, to do justice and righteousness.” (I Kings 10.9)*

*“Then the LORD said to me, “Go again, love a woman who is loved by her husband, yet an adulteress, even as the LORD loves (**ahab**) the sons of Israel, though they turn to other gods and love raisin cakes.” (Ho 3:1).*

A Life that includes affectionate love (2B)

Ahab/ahav:

*“In all their affliction He was afflicted, And the angel of His presence saved them;
In His love (**ahab**) and in His mercy He redeemed them, And He lifted them and carried them all the days of old. (Is 63:9–10).*

*“At that time,” declares the LORD, “I will be the God of all the families of Israel, and they shall be My people.” Thus says the LORD, “The people who survived the sword found grace in the wilderness— Israel, when it went to find its rest.” The LORD appeared to him from afar, saying, “I have loved (**ahab**) you with an everlasting love; Therefore I have drawn you with lovingkindness (**chesed**).” (Je 31:1–6).*

A Life that includes affectionate love (3A)

Chashaq

*“Behold, to the LORD your God belong heaven and the highest heavens, the earth and all that is in it. “Yet on your fathers did the LORD set His affection to love (**chashaq**) them, and He chose their descendants after them, even you above all peoples, as it is this day. “So circumcise your heart, and stiffen your neck no longer. “For the LORD your God is the God of gods and the Lord of lords, the great, the mighty, and the awesome God who does not show partiality nor take a bribe. “He executes justice for the orphan and the widow, and shows His love (**ahab**) for the alien by giving him food and clothing. “So show your love (**ahab**) for the alien, for you were aliens in the land of Egypt. (Dt 10:14–21).*

A Life that includes affectionate love (3B)

Chashaq

Do YOU chashaq?

*“For He will give His angels charge concerning you, to guard you in all your ways. They will bear you up in their hands, that you do not strike your foot against a stone. You will tread upon the lion and cobra; the young lion and the serpent you will trample down. **“Because he has loved Me, therefore I will deliver him; I will set him securely on high, because he has known My name. He will call upon Me, and I will answer him; I will be with him in trouble; I will rescue him and honor him. With a long life I will satisfy him and let him see My salvation.”** (Ps 91:11–16).*

A Life that includes sadness and grief

A Life that includes sadness and grief (1)

“In all their affliction He was afflicted, and the angel of His presence saved them;

*In His love and in His mercy He redeemed them, And He lifted them and carried them all the days of old. But they rebelled And **grieved His Holy Spirit**; Therefore He turned Himself to become their enemy, He fought against them. (Is 63:9–10)*

*“Oh, **how often** they rebelled against him in the wilderness and **grieved his heart** in that dry wasteland. (Ps 78:40).*

*“Is not Ephraim my dear son, the child in whom I delight? Though I often speak against him, I still remember him. Therefore my heart yearns ("**groans**", hamah) for him; I have great compassion for him,” (Je 31:20).*

A Life that includes sadness and grief (2A)

Example: The Judgment on Moab in Isaiah and Jeremiah

*“My heart cries out over Moab; her fugitives flee as far as Zoar, as far as Eglath Shelishiyah. They go up the way to Luhith, weeping as they go; on the road to Horonaim they lament their destruction. The waters of Nimrim are dried up and the grass is withered; the vegetation is gone and nothing green is left. So the wealth they have acquired and stored up they carry away over the Ravine of the Poplars. Their outcry echoes along the border of Moab; their wailing reaches as far as Eglaim, their lamentation as far as Beer Elim. Dimon’s waters are full of blood, but **I will bring still more upon Dimon**— a lion upon the fugitives of Moab and upon those who remain in the land. (Is 15:5–9).*

A Life that includes sadness and grief (2B)

Example: The Judgment on Moab in Isaiah and Jeremiah

"My *heart* (5) is matched by *I will bring* (9), **identifying the mourner as the Lord**. He grieves over the plight of the fugitives (5), the stricken environment (6), the futile efforts to salvage something from the overthrow (7-8) and over what is yet to come (9). The explanatory conjunction 'for' runs through these verses (sadly omitted by the NIV), appearing in verse 5 before *they go* and *on the road*, and in verse 6 at the beginning and instead of *and* before *the grass*. It also appears at the beginning of verses 8 and 9 and instead of *but* in verse 9. **These verses are a long list of what touches the heart of God, who weeps as he smites.** The **grief of the judge of all the earth** is one of the two striking truths of this oracle. The other is that all this total loss and suffering arises from the single sin of pride (16.6)." [Motyer, *Isaiah*, in loc]

A Life that includes sadness and grief (3A)

Example: The Rejection of a Loving God

"I remember the devotion of your youth, your love as a bride, how you followed me in the wilderness, in a land not sown. (Jer 2.2) ... I thought how I would set you among my sons, and give you a pleasant land, a heritage most beautiful of all nations. And I thought you would call me, My Father, and would not turn from following me. Surely, as a faithless wife leaves her husband, so have you been faithless to me, O house of Israel. (Jer 3.19-20)

A Life that includes sadness and grief (4A)

But God's Love perseveres through our rejection:

"While God's suffering is in many respects analogous to the suffering of the people, there are **a number of ways in which the divine suffering differs**. This contrast is especially apparent in those human lament materials not used by God. **Thus, God's suffering is not such that he is overwhelmed by the experience; his emotions do not get out of control or lead to incapacitation**. Nor is God embittered in any way by what has occurred. God is able to "be angry and sin not."

A Life that includes sadness and grief (4B)

But God's Love perseveres through our rejection:

“God is able to absorb all the arrows of outrageous fortune that pierce him through and, **instead of becoming callous or removing himself from the line of fire, still seeks to bring about a future which is good for those who inflict the wounds.** In spite of the suffering God undergoes, **God's salvific will does not waver; God's steadfast love endures forever.** (Fretheim, p124)”

The Life that God Lives in the New Testament (1)

The **New Testament** knows of these aspects of God's life, of course: Rejoicing in Heaven, "enter the joy of your Lord", "Grieve not the Holy Spirit", "For God so loved the world...", 'learn how to please the Lord'.

And **joy, love, and sadness** were **pre-eminently exemplified in the life of Messiah-Christ Jesus:**

- *"A man of sorrows and acquainted with grief",*
- *"that My joy will be in you",*
- *"for the joy set before Him, endured the cross, despising its shame",*
- *"Greater love hath no man, than that he lay down his life for him..."*

[AUDIO CUT OFF HERE.]

[SLIDES from First Part – God Who Lives]

God Living “Inside” Israel’s History (5A)

God responding to their cutting off the only hope for restoration

"Again, if a prophet or priest or one of the people should utter The burden of Yahweh, then Yahweh would punish (pāqad 'al) that man and his household. It was not for those who were not called by Yahweh to utter his word. All they were permitted to do was to ask among themselves “What did Yahweh answer?” or “What did Yahweh say?” (v. 35). It was not for such as these to give utterance to the burden of Yahweh at any time. That burden was for the man to whom Yahweh entrusted his word (lit. “the man of his word,” 'îš debārô). If unauthorized people should utter Yahweh’s word they would only **pervert (hāpak, lit. “overturn”) the words of the living God, Yahweh of Hosts, our God (v. 36).**”

God Living “Inside” Israel’s History (5B)

God responding to their cutting off the only hope for restoration

"... The people were restricted merely to questions directed to the prophet, What did Yahweh answer you? or What did Yahweh say? (v. 37, cf. v. 35). (38–40) **The judgment on impostors was to be severe.** They had been forbidden to claim to be uttering the burden of Yahweh. If they persisted in deceiving the people **Yahweh himself would pick them up (nāšā) and throw them down like a “burden,”** and bring everlasting and unforgettable disgrace and humiliation upon them. [NICOT]"

God Living “Inside” Israel’s History (7A)

The Lord of Hosts -- back to David again, and even Joshua...

"The most frequently used compound title for the Israelite deity in the OT (Heb. YHWH šēbā.ôṭ). A similar title is “Yahweh, God of hosts.” These epithets describe Yahweh as both divine Warrior and divine King, with “hosts” referring to both earthly (e.g., the Israelites or their armies) and cosmic forces (celestial bodies or angels). It appears most often in the Prophets (esp. Isaiah, Jeremiah, Zechariah, and Malachi) and not at all in the Pentateuch. In 1 Sam. 1:3 it is associated with the shrine at Shiloh. **During Israelite conflict with the Philistines it is paralleled with “the God of the armies” (1 Sam. 17:45),** demonstrating, initially, a very militaristic understanding of the title. [Freedman, D. N., Myers, A. C., & Beck, A. B. (2000). Eerdmans dictionary of the Bible (820–821). Grand Rapids, Mich.: W.B. Eerdmans.]”

God Living “Inside” Israel’s History (7B)

The Lord of Hosts -- back to David again, and even Joshua...

"Now it came about when Joshua was by Jericho, that he lifted up his eyes and looked, and behold, a man was standing opposite him with his sword drawn in his hand, and Joshua went to him and said to him, "Are you for us or for our adversaries?"

*"He said, "No; rather I indeed come now as **captain of the host of the LORD.**" And Joshua fell on his face to the earth, and bowed down, and said to him, "What has my lord to say to his servant?"*

*The **captain of the LORD'S host** said to Joshua, "Remove your sandals from your feet, for the place where you are standing is holy." And Joshua did so. (Josh 5.13ff)*

God Living “Inside” Israel’s History (9A)

Living is more than just breathing...

"Daniel's fate is sealed. It will neither be possible for his friends to feed the lions or to engineer his survival in some other way, nor for his enemies to kill him if the lions do not (Rashi). There is also a deeper matter at issue than the conflict between Daniel's foes and his friends. The king has spoken of the possibility of God's delivering Daniel, and the sealing will make it necessary for God to prove himself in an extraordinary way if he is to act at all. "In testing Daniel, the king knows ... that he is testing God" (Lacocque)."

God Living “Inside” Israel’s History (10A)

"A man under authority..."

"As with Nebuchadnezzar's, the form of an encyclical presupposes and expresses Darius's own authority, but its use thus actually underlines the higher authority of the one to whom it bears witness. **The world powers testify to the sovereign authority of God, which they have witnessed at work. Once more the familiar affirmations of Israel's hymns issue from unexpected lips and express a new message.** In a similar way, the “impossible” legal requirement that people tremble with fear before Daniel's God gains part of its significance from the fact that its author is the person before whom people have earlier trembled with fear (5:19).”

Summary Statements for Reflection

Summary Statements for Reflection (1)

“The name living God **implies much more than simply “God is alive, not dead.”** The living God **acts, is conscious and aware of what is going on, and is powerful** (Dan. 5:23). This God controls the affairs of humans and nations, raises up, and puts down. This God judges and blesses. When humans are arrogant, the living God is able to humble them. If humans overestimate their power and defy his rule, God is able to intervene and to humble them. When humans are overwhelmed and in dire need, God is a refuge and strength.

[Lederach, P. M. (1994). Daniel. Believers church Bible commentary (142–144). Scottdale, Pa.: Herald Press.]”

Summary Statements for Reflection (2)

“**Life**’ occurs particularly frequently in the **Gospel of John**. As God is the living God, so God has granted Jesus to have life in himself (John 5:26) and to **bring life to humanity** (John 6:33, 51; 10:10). Jesus is ‘the bread of life,’ ‘**the light of life**,’ ‘the resurrection and the life,’ ‘the way, and the truth, and the life’ (John 6:48; 8:12; 11:25; 14:6). The one believing in Jesus receives eternal life both in the present (‘has passed from death to life,’ John 5:24) and in the future (‘I will raise him up at the last day,’ John 6:40). [Achtmeier, P. J., Harper & Row, P., & Society of Biblical Literature. (1985). Harper's Bible dictionary (1st ed.) (560–561). San Francisco: Harper & Row.]”

Summary Statements for Reflection (3A)

“The OT emphasizes differentiation of the God of Israel from the pagan gods and religions of the surrounding cultures (cf. G. E. Wright, *The OT Against Its Environment* [1950]). **The OT speaks much more of the living God than of the true God. A living God does something; He possesses power; He is spirit; He can answer by fire (1 K. 18:24).** The pagan gods are essentially lifeless, breathless, and powerless....”

Summary Statements for Reflection (3B)

“...God’s action in history, God’s revelation through his prophets, and God’s creation and control of the universe are the criteria that show Him to be the living Lord, whereas the pagan gods and idols are speechless, powerless, and helpless. It is therefore the presupposition of the entire corpus of OT writings that the God of Israel is the true and living God, and that the faith He founded in Israel corresponds to the reality as it is in Yahweh. [Bromiley, G. W. (1988; 2002). Vol. 1: The International Standard Bible Encyclopedia, Revised (189–190). Wm. B. Eerdmans.]”

Summary Statements for Reflection (4A)

“Related texts:

- The living God (Josh. 3:10; 1 Sam. 17:26; 1 Sam. 17:36; Isa. 37:17; Jer. 10:10; Dan. 6:26; Rom. 9:26; 2 Cor. 3:3; 1 Tim. 4:10; Heb. 3:12; Heb. 9:14; Heb. 10:31; Heb. 12:22; Rev. 7:2);
- I know that my redeemer lives (Job 19:25);
- reproaching the living God (2 Kgs. 19:4; 2 Kgs. 19:16);
- the well of the living One who sees me (Gen. 16:14);
- the Lord lives (2 Sam. 22:47; Ps. 18:46);
- the man in linen swore by him who lives for ever (Dan. 12:7);
- do not enter Gilgal, do not go to Beth-aven, do not swear, ‘As the Lord lives’ (Hos. 4:15);”

Summary Statements for Reflection (4B)

“Related texts:

- You are the Christ, the Son of the living God (Matt. 16:16);
- as the Father has life in himself (John 5:26);
- as the living Father sent me and as I live because of the Father (John 6:57);
- a living God who made heaven and earth and sea (Acts 14:15);
- we are the temple of the living God (2 Cor. 6:16);
- to serve a living and true God (1 Thess. 1:9);
- the church of the living God (1 Tim. 3:15);
- he who lives for ever and ever (Rev. 4:9; Rev. 4:10; Rev. 10:6; Rev. 15:7).

[Day, C. A. (2009). Collins Thesaurus of the Bible. Bellingham, WA: Logos Research Systems, Inc.]”

[SLIDES from 2nd Part – The Life God Lives]

A Life that includes joy and pleasure (3F)

Zephaniah 3:17 --"the John 3.16 of the OT"

"The expressions used for Yahweh's joy are *sus/sis*, **rejoice**, **feel merry**; *gil*, **exult**; and *rinnah*, **shouting with joy** (see v. 14). [Eszenyei Széles, M. (1987). Wrath and mercy : A commentary on the books of Habakkuk and Zephaniah. International theological commentary (112). Grand Rapids; Edinburgh: Eerdmans; Handsel Press.]"

A Life that includes affectionate love (2C)

Ahab/ahav:

*“When Israel was a youth I loved (**ahab**) him, and out of Egypt I called My son. The more they called them, the more they went from them; they kept sacrificing to the Baals And burning incense to idols. Yet it is I who taught Ephraim to walk, I took them in My arms; but they did not know that I healed them. I led them with cords of a man, with bonds of love (**ahab**), And I became to them as one who lifts the yoke from their jaws; And I bent down and fed them. (Ho 11:1–4)*

A Life that includes sadness and grief (2C)

Example: The Judgment on Moab in Isaiah and Jeremiah

"But God himself also mourns for Moab in Isa 15:5, 16:9, and 16:11:

“My heart cries out for Moab. ... Therefore I weep with the weeping of Jazer... I drench you with my tears ... My soul moans like a lyre for Moab and my heart for Kir-heres

A Life that includes sadness and grief (2D)

Example: The Judgment on Moab in Isaiah and Jeremiah

"Jer 48:30-32, 35-36 contains another recension of this oracle against Moab, and we find similar language used there in divine speech:

"I know this insolence, says the Lord... Therefore I wail for Moab; I cry out for all Moab; for the men of Kir-heres I mourn. ...More than for Jazer I weep for you.

"I will bring an end in Moab, says the Lord... Therefore my heart moans for Moab like a flute, and my heart moans like a flute for the men of Kir-heres.

A Life that includes sadness and grief (2E)

Example: The Judgment on Moab in Isaiah and Jeremiah

"To hear such mourning on the part of God for a non-Israelite people is striking indeed." [*The Suffering of God: An Old Testament Perspective*, Terence Fretheim, Fortress:1984.p 132f]

A Life that includes sadness and grief (3B)

Example: The Rejection of a Loving God

"What intimacy God desired in his relationship with the people, and what disappointment is expressed here! While literary purists might deplore the mixing of the parental and marital metaphors here, the effect is almost overwhelming in its pathos. God has been rejected both as parent and as husband! God is like a person who has been rejected not only by his spouse but by his children as well. God suffers the effects of the broken relationship at multiple levels of intimacy."

A Life that includes sadness and grief (3C)

Example: The Rejection of a Loving God

"The wounds of God are manifold... These texts just examined give us a glimpse into the heart of God. God is revealed not as one who remains coolly unaffected by the rejection of the people, but as one who is deeply wounded by the broken relationship. The interaction between God and people thus takes place not simply at the intellectual level as it were, nor in a law court; the exchange occurs also at the emotional level. God shares feelings, not just thoughts. The people know not only what God thinks, but what God feels. Thus, a holistic picture of God emerges. God relates at every level with the whole person of each individual. (Fretheim, p 116; 123)"

The Life that God Lives in the New Testament

The Life that God Lives in the New Testament (2A)

The Life that flowed from the wounds of the Living-Lord Incarnate--
Isaiah 53 (NLT).

“Who has believed our message? To whom has the LORD revealed his powerful arm?”

“My servant grew up in the LORD’s presence like a tender green shoot, like a root in dry ground.

“There was nothing beautiful or majestic about his appearance, nothing to attract us to him.

“He was despised and rejected—a man of sorrows, acquainted with deepest grief.

“We turned our backs on him and looked the other way. He was despised, and we did not care.

The Life that God Lives in the New Testament (2B)

The Life that flowed from the wounds of the Living-Lord Incarnate--
Isaiah 53 (NLT).

“Yet it was our weaknesses he carried; it was our sorrows that weighed him down.

“And we thought his troubles were a punishment from God, a punishment for his own sins!

“But he was pierced for our rebellion, crushed for our sins. He was beaten so we could be whole. He was whipped so we could be healed.

“All of us, like sheep, have strayed away. We have left God’s paths to follow our own. Yet the LORD laid on him the sins of us all.

The Life that God Lives in the New Testament (2C)

The Life that flowed from the wounds of the Living-Lord Incarnate--
Isaiah 53 (NLT).

“He was oppressed and treated harshly, yet he never said a word.

“He was led like a lamb to the slaughter. And as a sheep is silent before the shearers, he did not open his mouth.

“Unjustly condemned, he was led away.

“No one cared that he died without descendants, that his life was cut short in midstream. But he was struck down for the rebellion of my people.

“He had done no wrong and had never deceived anyone.

“But he was buried like a criminal; he was put in a rich man’s grave.

The Life that God Lives in the New Testament (2D)

The Life that flowed from the wounds of the Living-Lord Incarnate--
Isaiah 53 (NLT).

“But it was the LORD’s good plan to crush him and cause him grief.

“Yet when his life is made an offering for sin, he will have many descendants. He will enjoy a long life, and the LORD’s good plan will prosper in his hands.

“When he sees all that is accomplished by his anguish, he will be satisfied. And because of his experience, my righteous servant will make it possible for many to be counted righteous, for he will bear all their sins.

“I will give him the honors of a victorious soldier, because he exposed himself to death. He was counted among the rebels. He bore the sins of many and interceded for rebels.

The Life that God Lives in the New Testament (3)

I came that they may have life and have it abundantly. (Jn 10:10).

*In him was life, and **the life was the light of men**. The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness has not overcome it. (Jn 1:4–5).*

The God who Lives—

The Witness of the Old Testament
(Part 4)