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ALPHA & OMEGA Dayspring! **AM**
ETERNAL LIFE First Begotten
Amen **DELIVERER** Jehovah
Lion of the Tribe of Judah
Captain of Salvation Holy One

Rose of
Emm
Lan
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friend
Living
PROT
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STAR
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Son of God **VICTORY** Healer
KING OF KINGS Salvation WAY
Bridegroom Bread of Life *Rest*
Wonderful Jesus Christ Our Lord



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WHAT ARE WE ADORING IN CHRIST:

THESE TITLES OF JESUS AND THEIR DEEPER MEANING OPEN US UP TO THE DEPTH OF BOTH IN THE OLD TESTAMENT AND NEW TESTAMENT THEIR DEEPER MEANING.

MESSIAH / CHRIST

These two titles are equivalent, both meaning "**anointed one**," from the Hebrew verb *MASHAH* ("to anoint, smear with oil, pour oil over someone") and the Greek verb *CHRIO* (same def.). Many different people were called "anointed":



OT: "The Anointed One of the LORD" frequently refers to *currently reigning or past kings*, esp. **Saul** (1 Sam 16:6; 24:6; 26:9-23; 2 Sam 1:14-16) and **David** (2 Sam 12:7; 19:21; 23:1; etc.), and less often to a high patriarch, prophet, or **priest** (e.g. Lev 4:3, 5, 16; cf. Exod 29:29; 40:15; etc.). The title is applied to an expected *future* "anointed" leader only in **Dan 9:25** and in non-biblical writings from Qumran. Early Judaism had a variety of different expectations as to what kind of a leader this "Messiah" would be: **royal** (a king like David, to lead the nation politically and militarily), **priestly** (a high priest or religious leader to reform the temple worship), **prophetic** (a prophet like Moses or Elijah or others, to call the people to moral and spiritual reform), or some combination of these.

NT: A transliteration of the Hebrew **MESSIAS** is used *only* in John 1:41 & 4:25. Elsewhere, the NT always uses the Greek translation **CHRISTOS** ("Christ"), although the NRSV more loosely translates it as "Messiah" 68 times. In the NT, the title refers only to Jesus, fairly often in the Gospels (7 Mk; 16 Mt; 12 Lk; 19 Jn) and very frequently in Paul's letters (382 times). Paul uses "Christ Jesus," "Jesus Christ," or even "Christ" alone, as if it were a proper name. In Luke 4:18, Jesus quotes the scripture: "The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because *he has anointed me* to preach good news to the poor..." Christians later used the **Chi-Rho symbol** (first two letters of "Christ" in Greek) as a monogram for Jesus.



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LORD / LORD

Originally it was a title of respect used for people superior to yourself, so it simply meant "**Sir**" or "**Master**," just like *Señor* in Spanish, *Herr* in German, or "Lords and Ladies" in British. Later it is often also used for various gods or for the God of Israel.

OT: The Hebrew title **ADONAI** simply means "lord" or "master," and is often used for humans and/or for God. Although God's name in Hebrew (YHWH - called the "tetragrammaton" or "four sacred letters") is very *often written* in the Bible, it was *rarely pronounced* by Jews after the Babylonian exile. Instead, people substituted the title Adonai. To distinguish between the two uses of *Adonai*, many English Bibles print this title in small capitals (LORD) when it substitutes for God's name, and in regular letters (Lord) otherwise. Both are combined in Num 36:2; 1 Sam 25:28; Ps 110:1; etc.

NT: The Greek word **KYRIOS** is very frequent (80 Mt; 18 Mk; 104 Lk; 52 Jn; 107 Acts; 274 Paul; 717 total), with a variety of meanings. It sometimes refers to God or to humans, but usually to Jesus (both senses are combined in (Mark 12:36; Matt 22:44; Luke 20:42; Acts 2:34). Some people (esp. foreigners) may call Jesus *Kyrie* simply as a sign of respect ("Sir" - Mark 7:28; John 4:11; etc.), while his disciples usually refer to him as their "master." In later texts, calling Jesus "Lord" is an assertion of his messianic or divine status (Acts 2:34-36; Phil 2:11). In Luke, the disciples also address Jesus as an **Epistates** ("master") seven times. In Paul, "the Lord" is often used as a substitute for Jesus' name. Note also common phrases, such as "the Lord's Day" (Rev 1:10), "the Lord's Supper" (1 Cor 11:20), etc.

HOLY ONE

Originally a common circumlocution for God (a phrase used to avoid speaking God's name), it is later also applied as a title for Jesus or other "saints."

OT: In the singular, "Holy One" always and only refers to God (1Sam 2:2; Job 6:10; etc.), often also called "the Holy One of Israel" (2 Kgs 19:2; Isa 1:4; etc.). In the plural, "holy ones" can refer to human or angelic beings that are close to God (Deut 33:2-3; Ps 16:3; 34:9; etc.)



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NT: Jesus is called the "Holy One of God" by unclean spirits (Mark 1:24; Luke 4:34) and by Peter (John 6:69). Acts 2:27 and 13:35 quote Ps 16:10 to call Jesus the "Holy One," a title that is also used of Jesus in Acts 3:14; 1 John 2:20; and Rev 3:7; 16:5.

I AM

OT: God's name (*YHWH*) is revealed to Moses in the story of the burning bush. It means something close to "I am" (see Exod 3:14; 6:2-3; Deut 32:39; Isa 43:25; 51:12; etc.; cf. Matt 22:32). It is simply called "the Name" by Jews, and is also known as the Tetragrammaton (lit. "four letters" in Greek). Ancient and modern Jews revere God's name so highly that they dare not speak it aloud, instead substituting circumlocutions such as "the Name" or simply "God" or usually "the Lord" (Heb. *Adonai*).



NT: In the Synoptic Gospels, the phrase "I am" is used only a few times by Jesus (Mark 14:62; Luke 22:70; 24:39), especially when Jesus walks on the water (Mark 6:50; Matt 14:27; cf. John 6:20), a story that functions as a "theophany" (appearance of a god). Messianic pretenders may also deceive people by saying "I am" (Mark 13:6; Matt 24:5; Luke 21:8). In John's Gospel, Jesus himself says "I Am" (Greek *EIMI*) fifty-four times. Twenty-four of these are emphatic (explicitly including the pronoun for "I": *EGO EIMI*), including some well-known metaphorical images, when Jesus calls himself the **bread of life**, the **light of the world**, the **door**, the **good shepherd**, the **resurrection** and the **life**, the **way** and the **truth** and the **life**, and the **true vine**. For more details, see the ["I Am"](#) webpage.

SON OF GOD / GOD'S SON

This title originally did *not* imply full *divinity*, but simply a person's special relationship with God. As Christian theology developed, however, it took on more exclusively divine connotations.

OT: In the singular or plural, God's "son" or "sons" can refer to angels (Gen 6:2), kings (Ps 2:7), good people (Wis 2:18), or the people of Israel overall (Exod 4:22), but it did not refer to a messianic figure until the 1st century BC, nor did it imply divinity until the early Christian era.



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NT: The historical Jesus referred to God as *Abba* ("Father"), but probably never called himself the "Son of God" in a divine sense. Such language developed only gradually in early Christianity (rare in Mk, a bit more in Mt & Lk & Paul, common only in Jn). In Mark, only the Evangelist (1:1), unclean/demonic spirits (3:11; 5:7), and a Roman centurion (15:39) directly call Jesus "Son of God," while the voice from heaven (1:11; 9:7), more demons (1:24), and the high priest (14:61) use *equivalent expressions* ("my beloved Son"; "Son of the Blessed One"; etc.). In Matthew & Luke these titles for Jesus are also used by Satan, the Holy Spirit, and Jesus' disciples, while Jesus himself calls some of his followers "sons/children of God" (Matt 5:9; Luke 20:36). Paul calls Jesus the "Son of God," and calls all Christians "sons/children of God" in a few important passages (esp. Rom & Gal). John has much more "Father/Son" language, and is the first to call Jesus the "*unique-Son*" of God (Gk. *monogenes huios*, lit. "the one-of-a-kind son"; John 3:16, 18; cf. 1:14, 18; 1 John 4:9; similarly also Heb 1:5; 5:5).

SON OF MAN

More literally "son of the human" in Aramaic & Greek; originally emphasizing someone's humanity, this title was later also used for a powerful heavenly figure.

OT: Used 93 times in **Ezekiel** and only 13 times in the rest of the OT (translated "mortal" in NRSV), it usually refers to *human* beings in contrast to God or angels; but it could also highlight the prophet's role as a special *representative* of the people. **Daniel 7:13** is the only OT text where this phrase describes a *heavenly* figure nearly equivalent to God in power and authority; in later Jewish apocalyptic literature, the "Son of Man" is a figure of divine *judgment*.

NT: Used 85 times, mostly in the four Gospels (14 Mk, 30 Mt, 25 Lk, 13 Jn) and almost always **by Jesus** referring to himself, but with various meanings. Some "Son of Man" sayings refer to the *human* activity of Jesus (as in Ezekiel), while others refer to his future role in divine *judgment* (as in Daniel 7:13; cf. Rev 1:13). Brand new is Jesus' use of "Son of Man" when he is telling his disciples about his upcoming *suffering and death* (esp. Mark 8:31; 9:31; 10:33).



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SON OF DAVID

Originally referred literally to descendants of David, the most famous king of ancient Israel, but as a title it later has several meanings.

OT: David had many sons (2 Sam 3), the most famous being Solomon, who succeeded him as king (2 Sam 11–12; 1 Kgs 1–2). In 2 Sam 7:8-16, God (through the prophet Nathan) promises that the Davidic royal dynasty will last forever, but after the Babylonian exile most Jewish rulers were not from David's family. Since King Herod was not, many people around the time of Jesus wanted another "Son of David" to become king again.

NT: As a title, "Son of David" (usually referring to Jesus) is not used very often (3 Mk, 10 Mt, 4 Lk, 0 Jn), although "David" is mentioned 56 times total. In Mark & Luke, the phrase seems to refer *not* to royal power, but rather to the magical/healing power for which Solomon was famous (e.g. Mark 10:46-52). Only Matthew uses this more often and more clearly as a messianic title with royal connotations (already in 1:1, also 12:23; 21:9; etc.). Matthew also stresses Jesus' Jewish heritage by calling him "Son of Abraham" (1:1).

SON OF MARY / SON OF JOSEPH

As explained in the introduction above, most people in the ancient world did not have "last names," but were identified by their geographical origin ("Jesus of Nazareth"; "the Galilean"), or their occupation ("the carpenter"), or their fathers ("the son of Joseph"; "the carpenter's son"). Women were usually identified through the closest male relative (daughter of..., wife of..., mother of...), but identifying a man through his mother ("Jesus, the son of Mary" - Mark 6:3; cf. Matt 13:55) is rather unusual. "Son of Mary" did not become an important title for Jesus until later centuries, when Church Councils defined Jesus' two-fold nature ("fully human and fully divine"). Although "Son of Mary" seems to emphasize Jesus' human nature (with "Son of God" expressing his divine nature), Christian theology later defined Mary as "Mother of God" (*THEOTOKOS*), not just mother of the human side of Jesus.



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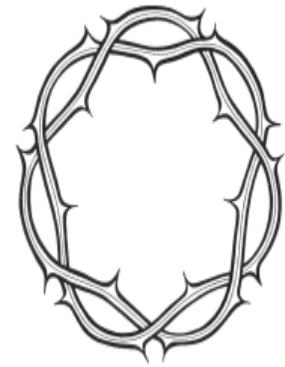
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KING OF THE JEWS / KING OF ISRAEL

Obviously a title connoting the political and military leadership of the Jewish people.

OT: From the 18th to 11th centuries, the Hebrews were a loose confederation of "tribes," not a monarchy. God was considered their king. The first human "kings" were Saul, David, and Solomon. Thereafter, the "Kings of Israel" and the "Kings of Judah" ruled over separate realms. After the Babylonian exile, "Judah" was usually called "Judea," the land of the "Jews." The exact title "King of the Jews" is not used in the OT, but obviously there were many "kings" over the people.



NT: The phrase "King of the Jews" is only applied to Jesus, once at his birth (Matt 2:2) and 17 times at his trial and crucifixion (Mark 15:2, and in all 4 Gospels, but only by opponents). Jesus is also called "King of Israel" four times (Matt 27:42; Mark 15:32; John 1:49; 12:13). Jesus himself refuses to be made king (Matt 4:8-10; John 6:15), but often speaks of the "Kingdom of God" and uses kings as characters in his parables. The inscription place on the cross above Jesus' head said "Jesus of Nazareth, King of the Jews" (John 19:19; cf. Mark 15:2-26; Matt 27:11-37; Luke 3-38), from which is derived the common abbreviation **INRI** (from the Latin "**I**esus **N**azarenius **R**ex **I**udaeorum").

PROPHET

A "prophet" is *not* primarily someone who "predicts" the future, but rather is a chosen messenger or *spokesperson* for God, whose role is to speak God's words and perform miraculous and/or symbolic actions in order to convey God's messages to the people.

OT: The most important early prophets are Elijah and Elisha (1 Kings 16 — 2 Kings 9), who both perform many miracles. The four major prophetic books are attributed to Isaiah, Jeremiah, Ezekiel, and Daniel. The OT also promises that "a prophet like Moses" will appear (Deut 18:15-18) and/or the prophet "Elijah will return" (Mal 4:5-6) in the last days.



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NT: The OT prophets are often mentioned and quoted, esp. in Matthew. Both John the Baptist and Jesus are appropriately considered "prophets," because of their speech and actions, even though they have very different styles. In the Synoptics, Jesus says that John the Baptist was a prophet and compares him to Elijah (Matt 11:7-19; Luke 7:24-35), but in the Fourth Gospel, John [the Baptizer] himself disputes that he was the Elijah-figure people were expecting (John 1:19-23). Jesus is also considered a "great prophet" by many people (Mark 6:14-16; 8:28; Matt 21:11; Luke 7:16; 24:19; John 6:14; etc.).

RABBI / RABBOUNI / TEACHER

Hebrew and Aramaic words meaning "my master" in general, or "my teacher" in particular. They were not used as titles in OT times, but were common titles of respect by the time of Jesus, especially but not only for teachers.

A Greek transliteration of the *Hebrew* "**Rabbi**" occurs only in the Gospels (3 Mk, 4 Mt, 0 Lk, 8 Jn), while a transliteration of the *Aramaic* "**Rabbouni**" occurs only in Mark 10:51 and John 20:16. Both titles are explicitly translated in John as meaning "teacher" (1:38; 20:16), and both are almost always applied to Jesus (except Matt 23:7-8, where Jesus talks about people being called "rabbi", and in John 3:26, where John the Baptist is called "rabbi"; cf. Luke 3:12). These titles are used almost exclusively by his own disciples (Peter, Judas, etc.), or by a few minor characters (Bartimaeus, Nicodemus, or the "crowd" in general).

The NT frequently also uses the equivalent *Greek* word "**didaskalos**" (meaning "teacher" - 12 Mk, 12 Mt, 17 Lk, 8 Jn), usually when Jesus is addressed by various people (disciples and opponents), but sometimes in Jesus' own sayings about "teachers" (see esp. Matt 10:24-25; 23:6-12). Outside of the Gospels, some early Christian leaders are also called "teachers" (Acts 13:1; Rom 2:20; 1 Cor 12:28-29; Eph 4:11; etc.)

SAVIOR

A title originally used for God or any human being who would "save" people from present or future dangers. In Greco-Roman politics, this title was also often applied to the emperor as a "benefactor," providing material benefits.



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OT: "Savior" is sometimes applied to human leaders (e.g. Neh 9:27), but is used mainly as a title for God (ca. 12 times).

NT: The title is rarely used in most NT writings (0 Mk, 0 Mt, 3 Lk, 1 Jn, 2 Acts, 1 Paul), but is more common in the later "Pastoral" and "Catholic" epistles (25 times). In Luke, "Savior" only once refers to God (Luke 1:47), and twice to the new-born Jesus (1:67, 2:11). The longer phrase "Savior of the world" occurs only in John 4:42 and 1 John 4:14.

However, as mentioned in the introduction above, the name "Jesus" (or "Joshua" or "Yeshua") itself means "God saves" (cf. Matt 1:21). Also, the verb "to save" is frequently applied to Jesus' ministry (cf. Matt 8:25; Mark 13:13; Luke 7:50; John 3:17; etc.).



The ancient symbol at the right contains abbreviations for the name "Jesus" and "Christ" (the first and last letters of each word in Greek), along with the verb "NIKA", meaning "to conquer, win, be victorious"; thus the phrase means "Jesus Christ is victorious".

SUFFERING SERVANT

The combination "suffering servant" is not really a biblical title, but a scholarly short-hand for the servant of God who suffers much (see esp. the "Servant Songs" of Isaiah 42:1-4; 49:1-6; 50:4-9; 52:13-53:12), or any righteous person who suffers (even if not explicitly called a "servant" in Ps 22, which is quoted in Mark 15:34). Jesus often speaks of himself and his disciples as "servants" (Mark 9:35; 10:42-45; John 13:1-20; Acts 3:13-26; etc.) and also often speaks of the necessity of his upcoming suffering (Mark 8:31; 9:31; 10:32; and par.). Matthew quotes and applies Isa 42 to Jesus (Matt 12:18-21), while Peter several times refers to the crucified and risen Jesus as God's servant (Acts 3:13, 26; 4:27, 30).

EMMANUEL / IMMANUEL

A Hebrew *name* occurring in the NT only in Matt 1:23 (citing the LXX version of Isa 7:14), where it is correctly translated as meaning "God is with us." This OT prophetic text connects God's saving *presence* among his people with the birth of



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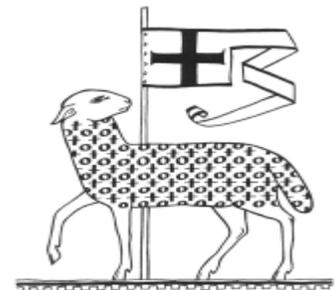
a child (Isa 7:13-17; cf. 8:1-10). Although it did not refer to a miraculous virgin birth in its original 8th-century BCE context, it was applied by early Christians (such as the author of Matthew) to the birth of Jesus. Matthew also explicitly connects the name "Emmanuel" with the name "Jesus," which means "God saves" (1:21-23).

LOGOS / WORD

Used as a Christological title only in John 1:1-18, but very common in later Christianity. The Greek word *LOGOS* can refer not only to a single "word," but also to a "phrase," a "sentence," a "speech," or even the power of "reason" or the "mind." John's use of this title alludes especially to the OT story of God creating the world merely by speaking (Gen 1), while John's statement that "the Word became flesh and dwelt among us" (John 1:14) is somewhat similar to Matthew's use of the title "Emmanuel" (Matt 1:2)

LAMB OF GOD / PASSOVER LAMB

In 1 Cor 5:7, Paul calls Jesus "our Passover" (Gk. *pascha*) which is rendered "Paschal Lamb" in some English translations. The expression "Lamb of God" (*agnos tou theou*) is used only in John 1:29, 36, as John the Baptist points to Jesus (cf. Acts 8:32; 1 Pet 1:19). This image became much more popular in later Christian art and in



the celebration of the Eucharist. In John it is related to the detail that Jesus' death occurs at the very same time that the Passover lambs were slaughtered in the Jerusalem Temple (John 19:28-42 - on the "Day of Preparation"), so Jesus himself replaces the sacrificial lambs, whose blood was necessary for the forgiveness of sins in the Jewish sacrificial system. The "lamb (*arnion*) standing as if it had been slain" is also prominent in the Book of Revelation (5:6, and 30 times total).

SHEPHERD OF ISRAEL / GOOD SHEPHERD

OT: In part because the patriarch Jacob and his sons were literally herders of sheep, goats, and other flocks (Gen 37:2; 46:32-34; 47:3), God is sometimes



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described as the "Shepherd of Israel" and related imagery (Ps 80:1; cf. Gen 48:15; Ps 23:1; 28:9; Isa 40:11; Ezek 34:11-24). Some of the later leaders of the Israelites were also literally shepherds, including Moses (Exod 3:1), Amos (1:1), and especially King David as a youth (1 Sam 16:11; 17:40; 2 Sam 5:2). Thus, shepherd imagery is frequently applied to the rulers of Israel, both the good and the bad ones (2 Sam 7:7; Jer 3:15; 23:1-4; 25:34-36; Ezek 34:1-10; Zech 10:2-3; 11:3-17). Some of the prophets express hope that a future ruler of Israel will be a good shepherd like David (Ezek 34:23; 37:24; Micah 5:1-4).

NT: Not only does Matthew refer to the above-mentioned prophecies while telling of Jesus' birth (Matt 2:6, citing Micah 5:1; 2 Sam 5:2), but Jesus himself uses shepherd imagery in some of his parables (Matt 18:12-14; 25:31-46). The evangelists also quote certain OT passages in describing the ministry and the death of Jesus (Mark 6:34 & Matt 9:36, citing Num 27:17 & par.; Mark 14:27 & Matt 26:31, citing Zech 13:7). In the Fourth Gospel, Jesus calls himself the "Good Shepherd" (John 10:11-16). Later NT writings similarly refer to Jesus as "the great shepherd of the sheep" (Heb 13:20), the "shepherd and guardian of your souls" (1 Pet 2:25), and the "chief shepherd" (1 Pet 5:4), while the Book of Revelation explicitly combines references to Jesus as both Lamb and shepherd (Rev 7:17).

GREAT HIGH PRIEST

A cultic official, one who offered sacrifices. In Judaism, all priests had to be from the Tribe of Levi, which Jesus was not. However, the Letter to the Hebrews calls Jesus a "great high priest" (4:14) of a different type, namely "according to the order of Melchizedek" (6:20). Melchizedek was the King of Salem (the city later called Jerusalem) at the time of Abraham (ca. 1800 BC), and is called "priest of God Most High" (cf. Gen 14:18-24).

ADVOCATE / PARACLETE

This title normally refers to the Holy Spirit in the Gospel of John (14:16, 26; 15:26; 16:7), but the first Johannine Epistle says, "we have an *advocate* with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous" (1John 2:1). In Greek, a "para-clete" is



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someone "called to your side" to assist you in some way; thus some translations also say "comforter" or "consoler."

ALPHA & OMEGA; FIRST & LAST; BEGINNING & END

The first and last letters of the Greek alphabet. Both God and Jesus are called "the Alpha and the Omega," with the same meaning as "the first and the last" and/or "the beginning and the end" (Rev 1:8, 17; 2:8; 21:6; 22:13).

