

*HALOT* to include “**progenitor**, first of a class or profession,” and “chief magistrate of a place.”<sup>139</sup> This would be akin to Yeshua being “Eternal Father” in the sense of Him being labeled along the lines of how many towns today have had various “city fathers.”

While there is certainly more to be evaluated, from both the Tanach and Apostolic Scriptures, about the nature and origins of the Messiah, the titles “**Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Eternal Father, Prince of Peace**” provide adequate witness to a Divine Messiah. Oswalt asserts, “The titles underscore the ultimate deity of this child-deliverer.”<sup>140</sup> Barry G. Webb also forthrightly concludes, “In the final analysis the language of verse 6 can apply only to one who is God incarnate.”<sup>141</sup>

## **Isaiah 37:16; 44:24; Nehemiah 9:6; Psalm 95:5-7** **“God is the Maker”**

“O LORD of hosts, the God of Israel, who is enthroned *above* the cherubim, You are the God, You alone, of all the kingdoms of the earth. You have made heaven and earth” (Isaiah 37:16).

“Thus says the LORD, your Redeemer, and the one who formed you from the womb, ‘I, the LORD, am the maker of all things, stretching out the heavens by Myself and spreading out the earth all alone’” (Isaiah 44:24).

“You alone are the LORD. You have made the heavens, the heaven of heavens with all their host, the earth and all that is on it, the seas and all that is in them. You give life to all of them and the heavenly host bows down before You” (Nehemiah 9:6).

“The sea is His, for it was He who made it, and His hands formed the dry land. Come, let us worship and bow down, let us kneel before the LORD our Maker. For He is our God, and we are the people of His pasture and the sheep of His hand...” (Psalm 95:5-7).

The uniform claim of the Tanach or Hebrew Scriptures is that the God of Israel is the One True Creator. Jeremiah 10:16 exclaims, “For the Maker of all is He” (also 51:19). This includes not only the universe at large (Psalm 102:25), but the creation of man and woman in His image (Genesis 1:27; 2:7). Quite contrary to some of the creation myths of the Ancient Near East, it is not as though the universe and humankind came as the result of some sexual union of gods and goddesses, only to create people to be their slaves. The Hebrew Tanach is fairly straightforward in its assertion that the LORD God alone created the universe at large, and man and woman, for His good pleasure and purposes—with all to be highly valued and treasured as originating from Him. Those who hold to either a high Christology of Yeshua the Messiah being uncreated as God, or a low Christology of Yeshua the Messiah being some created supernatural agent, both rightly recognize that the God of Israel is the One True Creator. Disagreements ensue regarding the relationship of Yeshua to this Creator.

How would those who affirm the God of Israel as the One True Creator, and perhaps Yeshua the Messiah as a supernatural yet created agent of God, widely perceive of Him in relation to the creation of the universe and humankind? Frequently, those who hold to a low Christology perceive or depict Yeshua in terms of the figure of Wisdom (Proverbs 8:22-31), a force of God which pre-existed our present universe, but in Second Temple Jewish literature, for sure, was nonetheless itself created (discussed further). Such a force of God, as depicted, was employed by Him to assist in the creation of the world.

<sup>139</sup> *HALOT*, 1:1.

<sup>140</sup> Oswalt, *Isaiah 1-39*, 246.

<sup>141</sup> Barry G. Webb, *The Message of Isaiah* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity, 1996), 69.

## Approaching the Nature of Yeshua from the Tanach

Those who hold to a high Christology of Yeshua the Messiah being uncreated, as One who is integrated into the Divine Identity, would definitely view various statements appearing in the Apostolic Writings as Yeshua not just participating in the creation of the universe, but participating in the creation of the universe in a way significantly different to that of the figure Wisdom. The statement of Colossians 1:16 declares, “For by Him all things were created, *both* in the heavens and on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or dominions or rulers or authorities—all things have been created through Him and for Him.” Those who hold to a high Christology may indeed agree that similar to the figure Wisdom, the Son was *a* means by which the Father created the universe; contrary to the figure Wisdom, the universe being created *by* or *in* Him and *for* Him, begs important factors to be probed about the relationship of the Son in regard to Creation. Hebrews 1:2-3 further testifies of Yeshua, that the Father “appointed [Him] heir of all things, through whom also He made the world. And He is the radiance of His glory and the exact representation of His nature, and upholds all things by the word of His power.” Would a supernatural yet created agent of God be an entity possessing the natural ability to be “upholding the universe by his word of power” (RSV)?

The further testimony of the Apostolic Scriptures is that Yeshua the Messiah was not just present at the creation of the universe, and that He was *the means* by which the Father created it; there are statements made of Yeshua the Messiah involving the creation and purpose of the universe and humankind, which no supernatural yet created entity can be said to have. The intriguing word of Ecclesiastes 12:1, “Remember also your Creator in the days of your youth,” when seen in the Hebrew *u'zekor et bor'ekha b'mei b'churotekha* (וְזָכַר אֶת-בּוֹרְאֶיךָ בַּיָּמִי בְּחֻרְתֶּיךָ), “Remember also **thy Creators** in days of thy youth” (YLT) or “and-remember! \*\*\* **Ones-Creating-you** in-days-of youths-of-you” (Kohlenberger),<sup>142</sup> certainly adds a dimension to be considered which can be commonly overlooked, and need not be left out, when evaluating the nature of the Messiah in relationship to the establishment of the cosmos.<sup>143</sup>

### Isaiah 42:8

#### “The Exclusive Glory and Praise to be Given to the Lord”

“I am the LORD, that is My name; I will not give My glory to another, nor My praise to graven images.”

When Isaiah 42:8 decrees, “I am HASHEM [YHWH/YHVH, יהוה]; that is My Name; I shall not give My glory to another, nor My praise to graven idols” (ATS), the frame of reference to be considered is the supremacy of the God of Israel in contrast to any and all idols of human origin. Motyer is right to specify, “The self-proclamation of the Lord reveals him as a distinct personal identity with his own *name*; he does not exist ‘incognito’ in the world’s gods. His *glory* cannot be shared. They may ape him, achieve a coincidental resemblance, but he is not there.”<sup>144</sup> The glory or *kavod* (כְּבוֹד) of God in view, is the great weight of awesome supremacy and purpose present in the Holy One of Israel, and His intentions for His Creation (Isaiah 42:5-7), which graven idols do not and cannot possess. The inclusion of *tehillah* (תְּהִלָּה) or “praise” not given to others, is useful in specifying how this particular glory is associated with veneration or worship.

Yeshua the Messiah prayed in the Garden of Gethsemane, “Now, Father, glorify Me together with Yourself, with the glory which I had with You before the world was” (John 17:5), a glory which surely involves a statement regarding the Messiah’s nature (John 1:1, 14). Yet, it has to be

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<sup>142</sup> Kohlenberger, 3:588.

<sup>143</sup> For a further, useful discussion, consult Chapter 15 of Bowman and Komoszewski, “Meet Your Maker,” pp 185-193.

<sup>144</sup> Motyer, *Isaiah*, 322.