

# What The Psalms Teach Us About Emotion

Victoria (BC) Christadelphians

<https://www.victoriabiblestudy.com/>

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# Outline

- 1) **The wisdom of the World:** A neuropsychology lesson
- 2) **The wisdom of the Word:** What the Bible (Psalms) teaches
- 3) **Jesus and God's Kingdom on Earth:** Joy everlasting

# The Wisdom of the World

# 5 Basic Emotions

## The Language of Emotion

ANGER

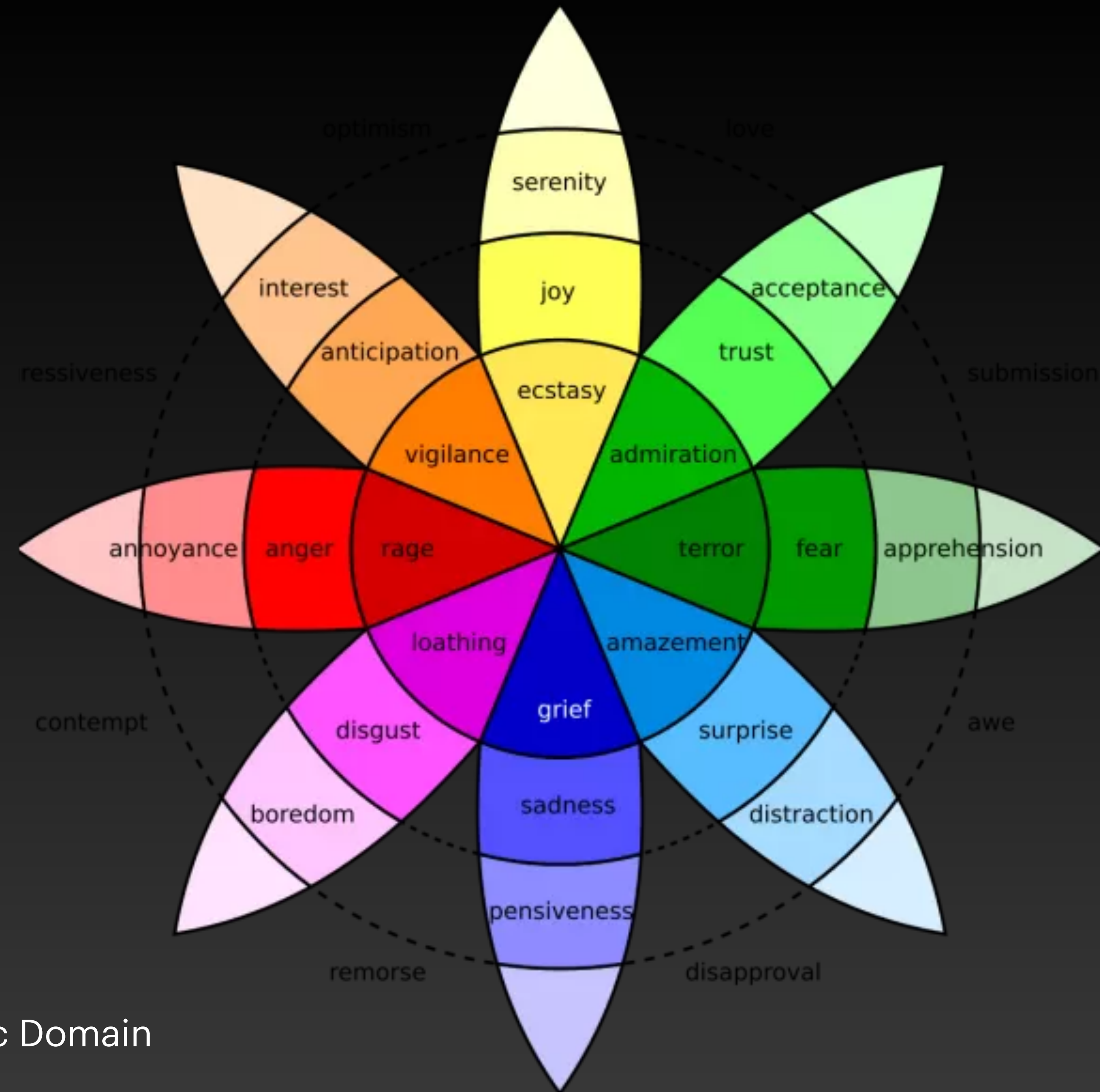
FEAR

DISGUST

SADNESS

JOY

\*SURPRISE

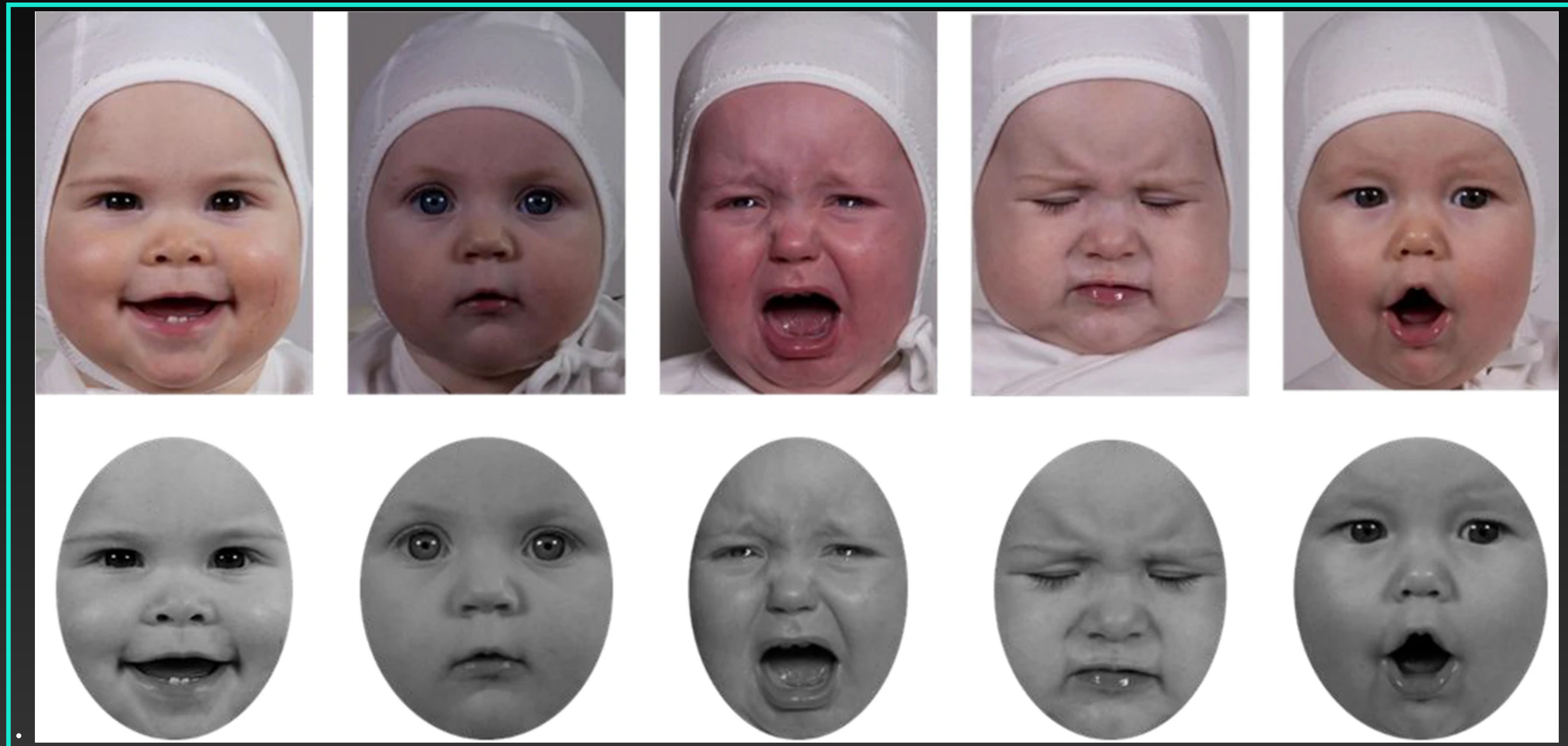


Plutchik's Wheel - Source, Wikimedia Commons, Public Domain



# The Development of Emotion

## 5 basic emotions in babies



Duque et al., 2024. *Figure 1*. DOI: <https://doi.org/10.3758/s13428-023-02163-9>



# INSIDE OUT

1:32-3:50

<https://youtu.be/koNNIaj8BM0?si=FpRfkYknGCI2t8gw&t=92>

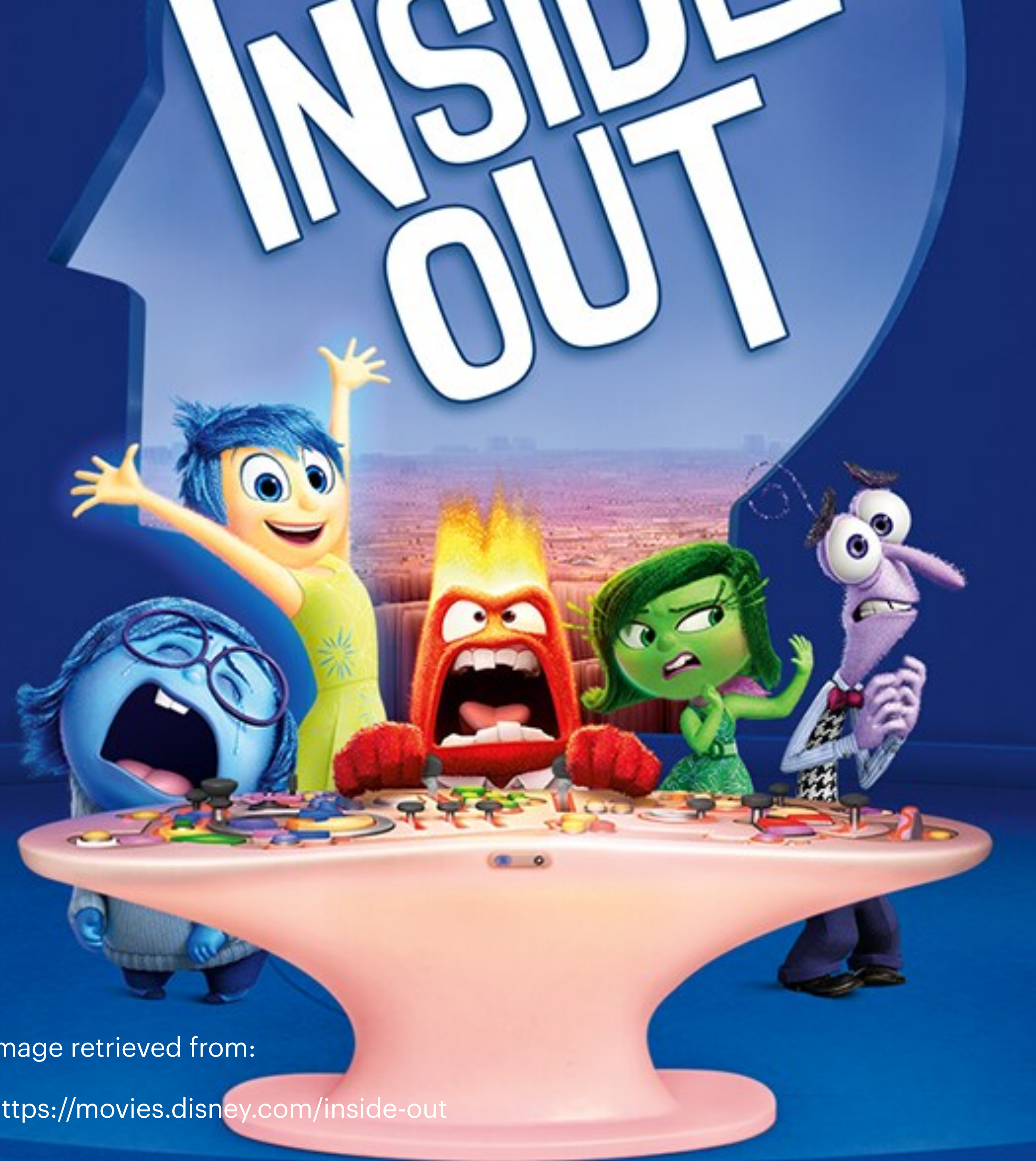


Image retrieved from:

<https://movies.disney.com/inside-out>



# The Brain

## ...and emotion

Regions involved in emotion:

- Prefrontal cortex (thinking)
- Limbic system (automatic)
  - amygdala
  - insula
  - hippocampus (memory)
  - hypothalamus (hormones)

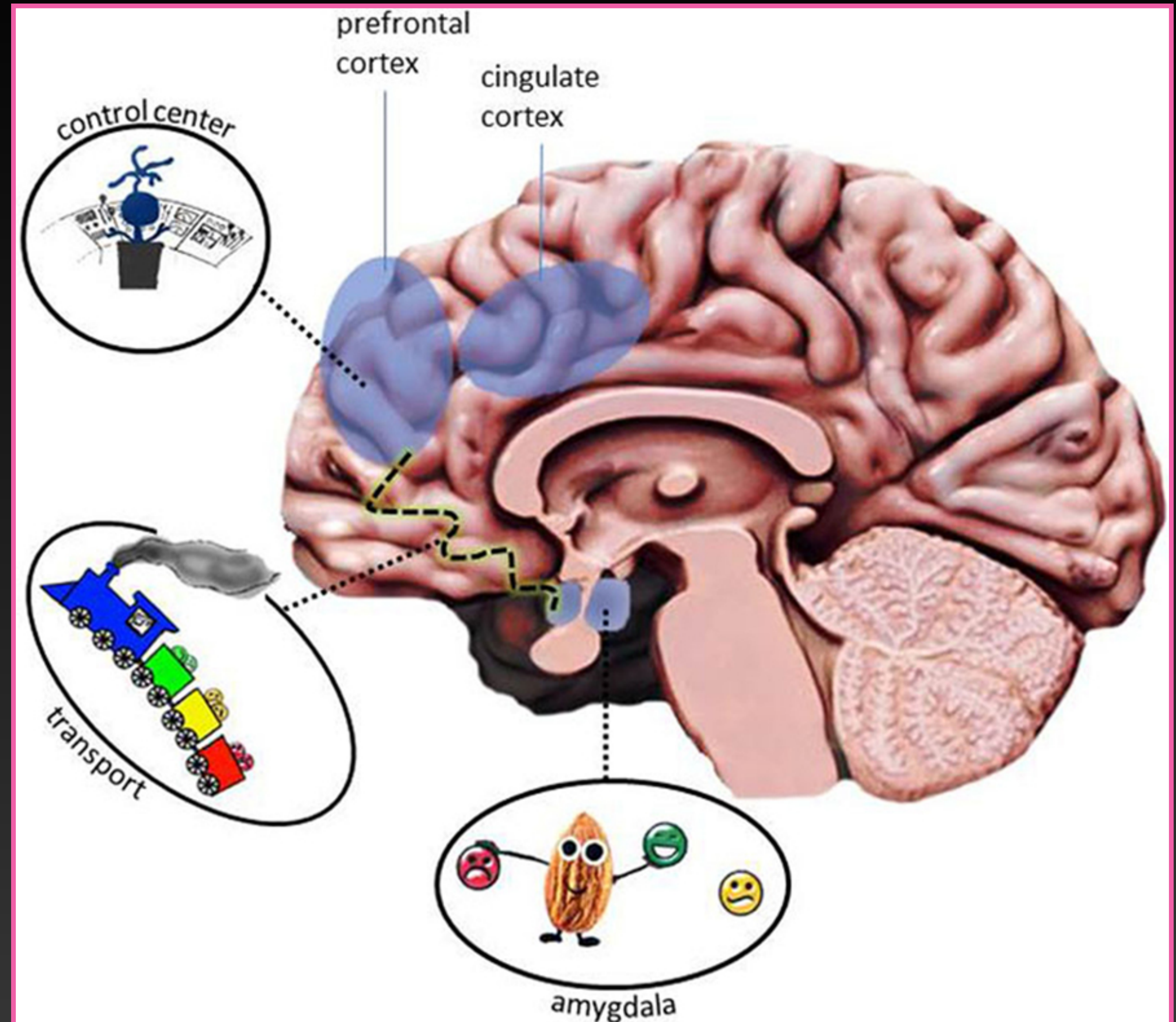


Figure 3. <https://kids.frontiersin.org/articles/10.3389/frym.2016.00016>



# Emotions are Meant for Survival

*“Emotions are a process, a particular kind of automatic appraisal influenced by our evolutionary and personal past, in which we **sense that something important to our welfare is occurring**, and a set of psychological changes and emotional behaviors begins to deal with the situation”*

-Eckman, P., 2025

*“Cognitive studies [...] have observed that our nervous system automatically reorients its processing resources towards two kinds of important stimulation: **novel stimuli** (i.e., unknown or unexpected) and **emotional and motivational stimuli** (i.e., important for the individual, such as food, danger, partners, social hierarchy)”*

-Duque et al., 2024



# The Significance of Our Emotional State





# Interacting with our Emotions

- \* We can misinterpret our emotions
- \* We can get emotional about incorrect thoughts

3 ways we interact with our emotions:

1. Suppress
2. React
3. Respond



# Summary

Emotion affects us every day...

“If it feels good, do it” ?

# The Wisdom of the Word



# Our Emotions can be **WRONG**

*“The **heart is deceitful** above all things, and desperately sick; who can understand it?*

*“I the LORD search the heart and test the mind, to give every man according to his ways, according to the fruit of his deeds.””*

*(Jeremiah 17:9-10 ESV)*

*“Whoever is **slow to anger** is better than the mighty, and he who rules his spirit than he who takes a city.”*

*(Proverbs 16:32 ESV)*

# The Psalms and Emotion

God and Jesus are {perfect} emotional beings

We are made in God's image (Genesis 1) and are {sinful} emotional beings

## THE STUDY:

- Word search of 5 basic emotions in the English Standard Version (ESV)
- Look at the various Hebrew words translated into these words
- Present key verses that highlight common themes

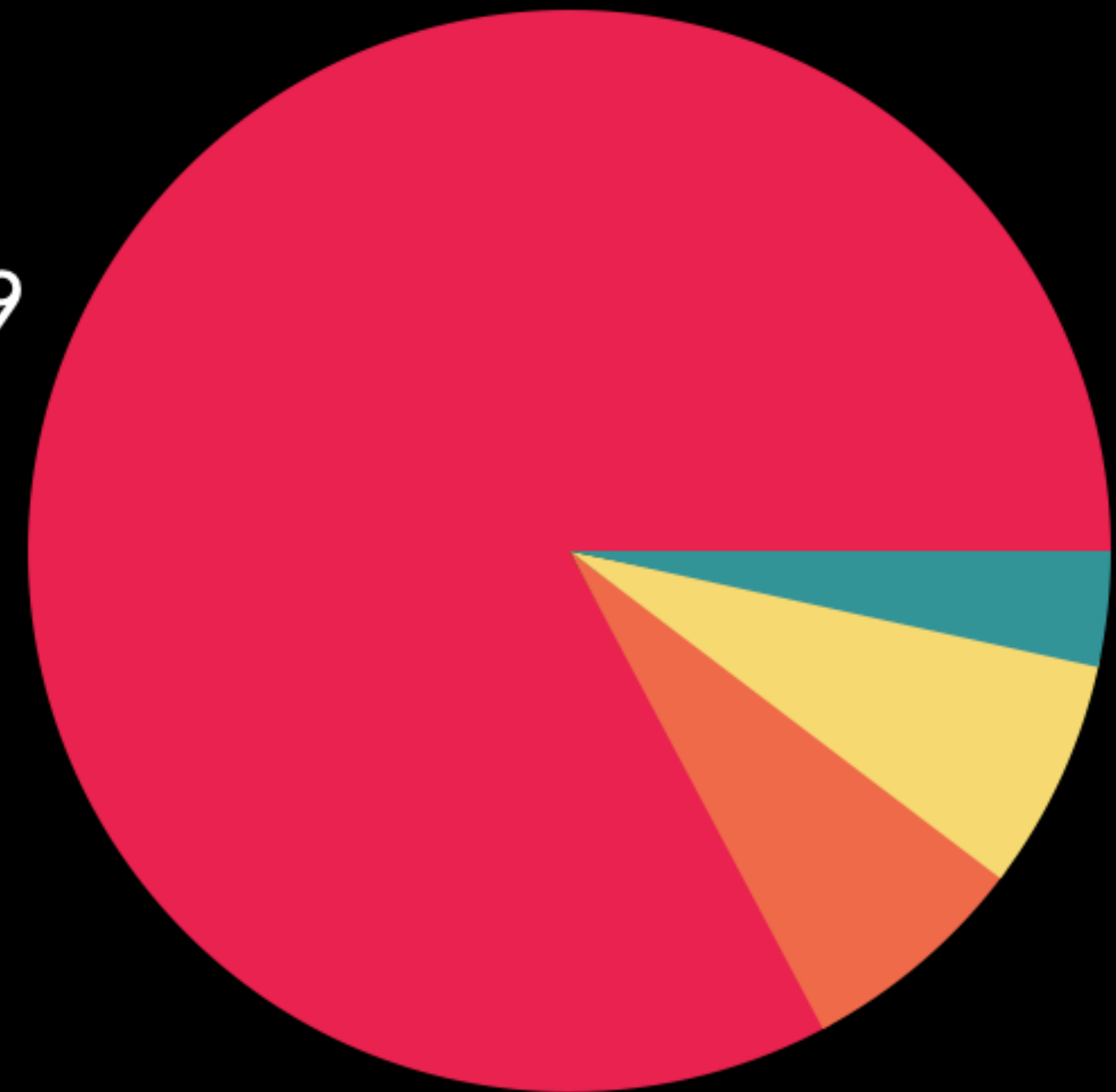


# ANGER

## Hebrew Words in Psalms

- 639. אַף 'aph, af; from 599; properly, the nose or nostril; hence, the face, and occasionally a person; also (from the rapid breathing in passion) ire:—anger(-gry), + before, countenance, face, + forbearing, forehead, + (long-)suffering, nose, nostril, snout, x worthy, wrath.

24 אַף  
'af  
H0639



2 קֶצֶף  
qetzef  
H7110

2 כַּעַס  
kha'as  
H3707

# ANGER

*“Therefore, when the LORD heard, he was full of wrath; a fire was kindled against Jacob; his **anger** rose against Israel [...]*

*the **anger** of God rose against them, and he killed the strongest of them and laid low the young men of Israel [...]*

*Yet he, being compassionate, atoned for their iniquity and did not destroy them; he **restrained his anger** often and did not stir up all his wrath.”*

*(Psalm 78:21, 31, 38 ESV)*

*“But you, O Lord, are a God merciful and gracious, **slow to anger** and abounding in steadfast love and faithfulness.”*

*(Psalm 86:15 ESV)*



# ANGER

Read Psalm 37:1-9

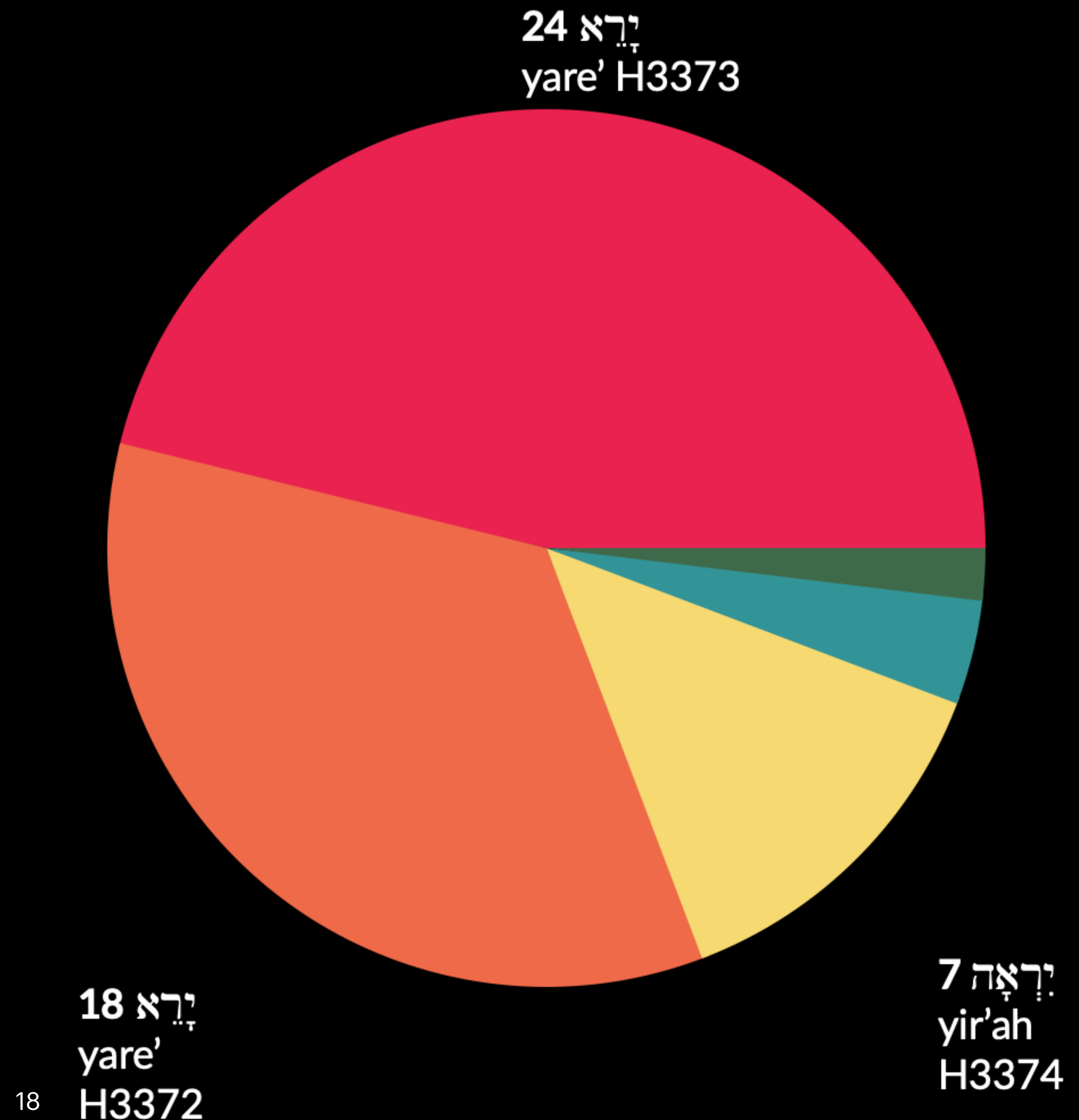
*“Refrain from anger, and forsake wrath! Fret not yourself; it tends only to evil.*

*For the evildoers shall be cut off, but those who wait for the LORD shall inherit the land” (v. 9)*

# FEAR

## Hebrew Words in Psalms

- 3373. יָרָא yare', yaw-ray'; from 3372; fearing; morally, reverent:—afraid, fear (-ful).
- 3372. יָרָא yare', yaw-ray'; a primitive root; to fear; morally, to revere; caus. to frighten:—affright, be (make) afraid, dread(-ful), (put in) fear(-ful, -fully, -ing), (be had in) reverence(-end), x see, terrible (act, -ness, thing).



# FEAR

*“The friendship of the LORD is for those who **fear [3373]** him, and he makes known to them his covenant.”*

(Psalm 25:14 ESV)

Read Psalm 23:1-6

*“Even though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will **fear [3372]** no evil, for you are with me; your rod and your staff, they comfort me”*

(v. 4).



# FEAR

*“The LORD is my light and my salvation; whom shall I **fear [3372]**? The LORD is the stronghold of my life; of whom shall I be **afraid [6342]**?*

*When evildoers assail me to eat up my flesh, my adversaries and foes, it is they who stumble and fall.*

*Though an army encamp against me, my heart shall not **fear [3372]**; though war arise against me, yet **I will be confident.**”*

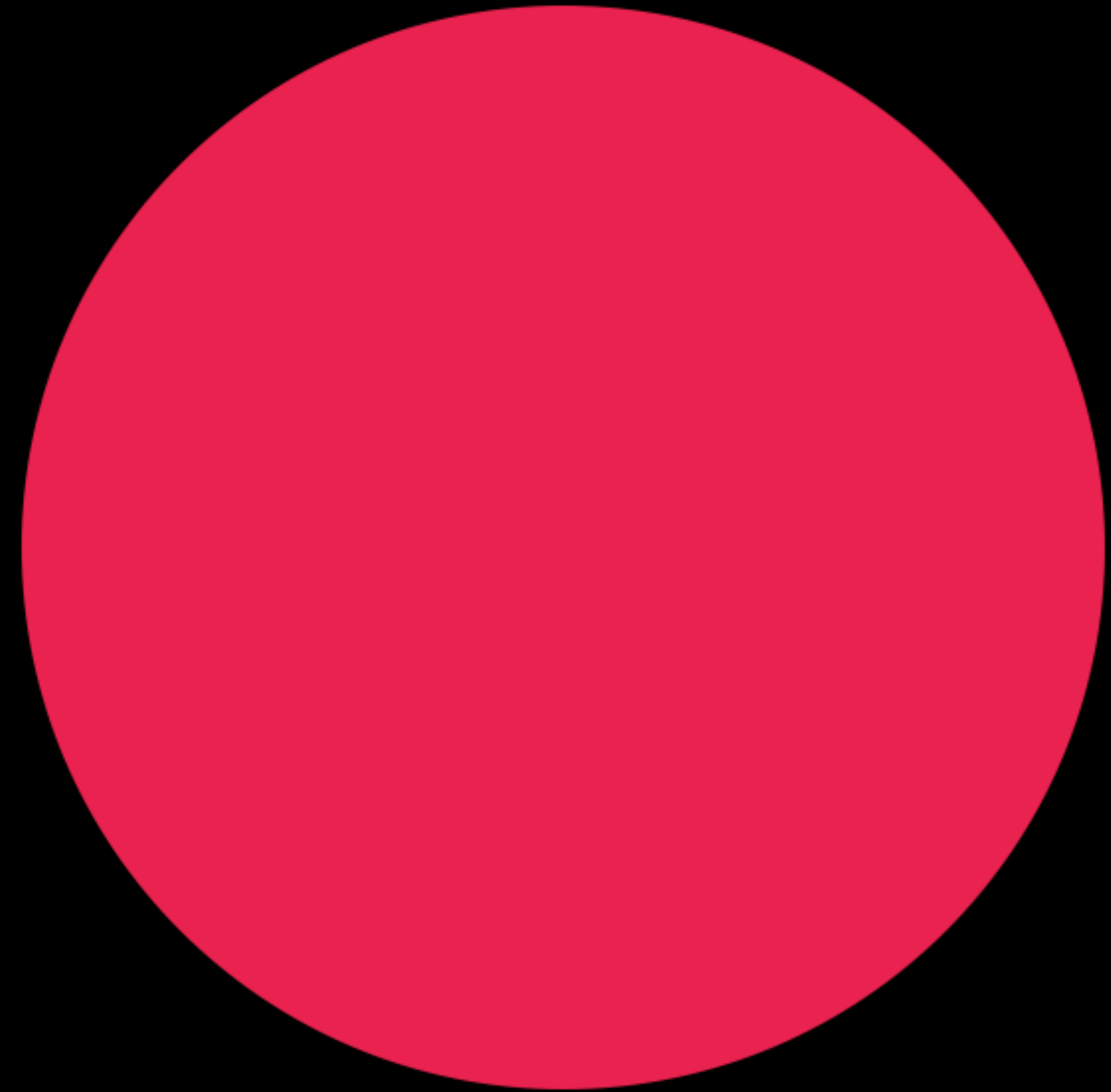
(Psalm 27:1-3 ESV)

# DISGUST

## Hebrew Words in Psalms

- 6962. קוּט quwt, koot; a primitive root; properly, to cut off, i.e. (figuratively) detest:—begrieved, loathe self.

קוּט 1  
qut  
H6962



# DISGUST

*"I look at the faithless with **disgust**, because they do not keep your commands."*

(Psalm 119:158 ESV)

*"Do I not hate those who hate you, O LORD? And do I not **loathe** those who rise up against you?  
I hate them with complete hatred; I count them my enemies."*

*Search me, O God, and know my heart! Try me and know my thoughts!*

*And see if there be any **grievous** way in me, and lead me in the **way everlasting!**"*

(Psalm 139:21-24 ESV)



# DISGUST

*“Therefore the wicked will not stand in the judgment, nor sinners in the congregation of the righteous;*

*for the LORD knows the way of the righteous, but the way of the wicked will perish.”*

(Psalm 1:5-6 ESV)

*“My eyes shed streams of **tears**, because people do not keep your law.”*

(Psalm 119:136 ESV)

# SADNESS

## Hebrew Words in Psalms

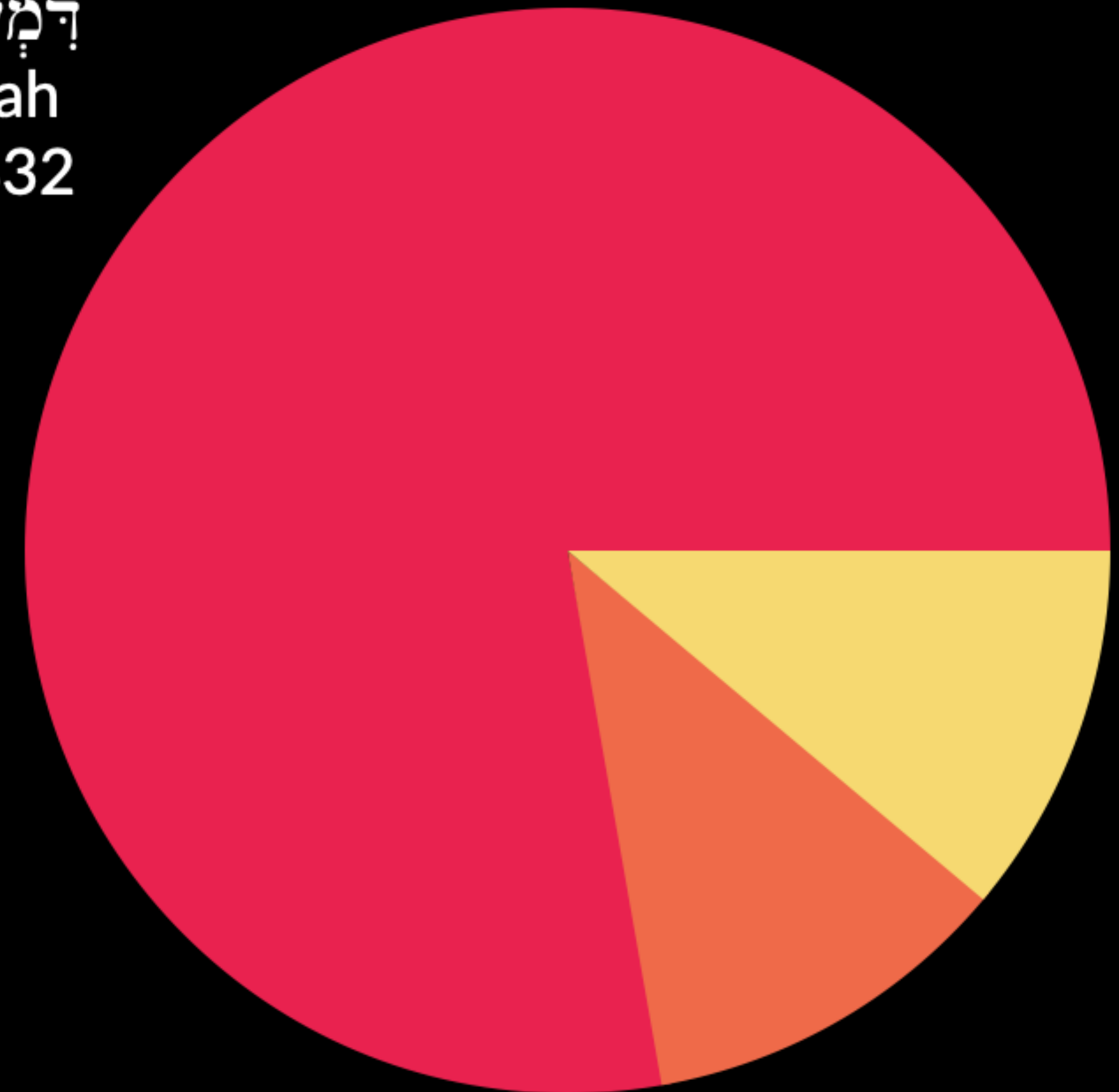
### TEARS:

- 1832. דִּמְעָה dim'ah, dim-aw';  
feminine of 1831; weeping:—tears.

### GRIEF:

- 3708. כַּעַס ka'as, kah'-as; or (in Job)  
כָּאוֹס kaoas, kah'-as; from 3707;  
vexation:—anger, angry, grief,  
indignation, provocation, provoking,  
x sore, sorrow, spite, wrath.

דִּמְעָה 7  
dim'ah  
H1832



מַיִם 1  
mayim  
H4325

כָּבִי 1  
vekhi  
H1065



# SADNESS

*“O LORD, rebuke me not in your **anger**, nor discipline me in your **wrath**.*

*Be **gracious** to me, O LORD, for I am **languishing**; heal me, O LORD, for my bones are **troubled**.*

*My soul also is greatly **troubled**. But you, O LORD—how long?*

*Turn, O LORD, **deliver** my life; save me for the sake of your **steadfast love**.*

*For in death there is no remembrance of you; in Sheol who will give you **praise**?*

*I am weary with my **moaning**; every night I flood my bed with **tears**; I drench my couch with my **weeping**.*

*My eye wastes away because of **grief**; it grows weak because of all my foes.*

*Depart from me, all you workers of evil, for the LORD has heard the sound of my **weeping**.*

*The LORD has heard my plea; the LORD **accepts** my prayer.*

*All my enemies shall be ashamed and **greatly troubled**; they shall turn back and be put to shame in a moment.”*

*(Psalm 6:1-10 ESV)*

# SADNESS

*“Why are you **cast down**, O my soul, and why are you in **turmoil** within me? Hope in God; for I shall again **praise** him, my **salvation** and my God.”*

(Psalm 42:11 ESV)

*“For his **anger** is but for a moment, and his **favor** is for a lifetime. **Weeping** may tarry for the night, but **joy** comes with the morning.”*

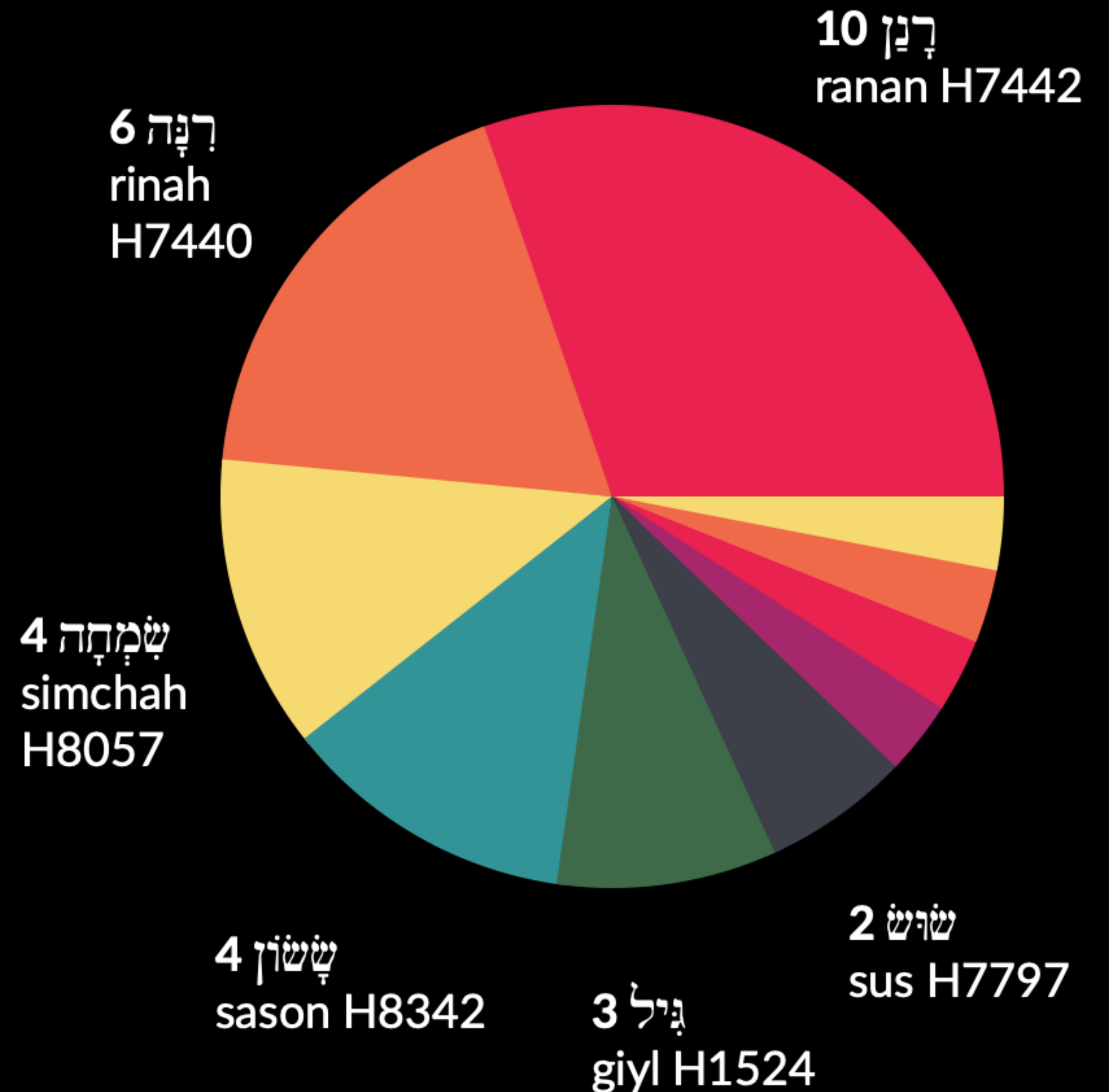
(Psalm 30:5 ESV)



# JOY

## Hebrew Words in Psalms

- 7442. רָנַן ranan, raw-nan'; a primitive root; properly, to creak (or emit a stridulous sound), i.e. to shout (usually for joy):—aloud for joy, cry out, be joyful (greatly, make to) rejoice, (cause to) shout (for joy), (cause to) sing (aloud, for joy, out), triumph.



# JOY

*“Purge me with hyssop, and I shall be **clean**; wash me, and I shall be **whiter than snow**.  
Let me hear **joy and gladness**; let the bones that you have broken **rejoice**.  
Hide your face from my sins, and **blot out all my iniquities**.  
Create in me a **clean heart**, O God, and **renew a right spirit** within me.  
Cast me not away from your presence, and take not your Holy Spirit from me.  
Restore to me the **joy of your salvation**, and **uphold me** with a **willing spirit**.”*

(Psalm 51:7-12 ESV)

# JOY

*“You make known to me the path of life; in your presence there is **fullness of joy**; at your right hand are **pleasures forevermore**.”*

(Psalm 16:11 ESV)

*“Your testimonies are my heritage forever, for they are **the joy of my heart**.”*

(Psalm 119:111 ESV)



# Jesus and God's Kingdom

## Joy Everlasting

# The Joy of Salvation

Read Revelation 21:1-4:

*“He will wipe away every **tear** from their eyes, and death shall be no more, neither shall there be **mourning, nor crying, nor pain** anymore, for the former things have passed away” (v. 4)*

Read Isaiah 65:17-19:

*“But be **glad and rejoice forever** in that which I create; for behold, I create Jerusalem to be a **joy**, and her people to be a **gladness**” (v. 18)*

# The Joy of Jesus

*“Therefore, since we are surrounded by so great a cloud of witnesses, let us also lay aside every weight, and sin which clings so closely, and let us run with endurance the race that is set before us, looking to Jesus, the founder and perfecter of our faith, who for the **joy** that was set before him endured the cross, despising the shame, and is seated at the right hand of the throne of God.”*

(Hebrews 12:1-2 ESV)



# The Joy of Jesus

*“Husbands, love your wives, as **Christ loved the church** and gave himself up for her, that he might **sanctify her**, having cleansed her by the washing of water with the word, so that he might present the church to himself in splendor, without spot or wrinkle or any such thing, that she might be **holy and without blemish.**”*

(Ephesians 5:25-27 ESV)

# References

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# Images

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