

The Alef–Tav

by Avram Yehoshua

<http://SeedofAbraham.net>

Some Messianics teach that the Hebrew word אֶת *'ate'* (which at times is also pronounced as *'et'*), found in the first verse of Genesis and *sometimes* in Hebrew translations of the first verse of the account of John, symbolizes Yeshua as the *Alef Tav*. (The Hebrew word is spelled with the letters *alef* and *tav*.)

Yeshua is definitely the Alpha and the Omega (Rev. 1:8, 17; 21:6; 22:13) which conceptually means He's the *Alef* and the *Tav*. Of this there is no question. *Alef* and *tav* are the first and the last letters in the Hebrew alphabet corresponding to the first and last letters of the Greek alphabet, *alpha* and *omega*, but note the not insignificant difference in Yeshua being *the Alef and the Tav* vs. those who present Him as the *Alef Tav* of John 1:1. The first is biblical and the second is kabbalistic.

Yeshua as the *Alef* and the *Tav* is also conceptually seen in Yahveh saying that He is the First and the Last (Is. 44:6;¹ see also 41:4; 48:12). But there are serious problems with anyone trying to present Yeshua as the *Alef Tav* of Gen. 1:1 or John 1:1.

Yeshua might have spoken in Hebrew to the Jewish Apostle John on the island of Patmos in Revelation 1:8, etc., but whether He did or not still allows for it to be translated into Hebrew. But with the *Alef* and the *Tav* in Hebrew it still doesn't bring us to any *'ate'* in Jn. 1:1 because Yeshua doesn't say in Revelation, 'I am the *Alef Tav*,' but rather, 'I am the *Alef* and the *Tav*.' The former is three letters of the Hebrew alphabet that come into English as 'the *Alef Tav*' (תַּאֵת *ha'ate*). The latter is made up of eight Hebrew letters that come into English as five words; 'the *Alef* and the *Tav*' (הָאֵלֶף וְהַתַּבֵּי *ha-alef vih-ha-tav*).

The word *'ate'* in Gen. 1:1 is a non-translatable word. It's used in Hebrew grammar as a marker to point to the word that follows it as being the definite direct object. Some kabbalistic Rabbis who loved 'to play with words' saw 'all of creation' in the *'ate'* of Gen. 1:1. This is because 'all the letters' of the Hebrew alphabet so to speak are 'in-between' *alef* and *tav*, and God used words (which are made of letters) to make His Creation.² This is the first step in recognizing *where* some believers have come up with Yeshua being the *Alef Tav* of Gen. 1:1.

Then they connect it to John 1:1 because *'ate'* is mentioned in (*some*) Hebrew translations of John 1:1, and Yeshua is the Word of God, as John presents in the first verse. So, they see Messiah in Gen. 1:1 and John 1:1 as the *Alef Tav*. As conceptually nice as that is, it's not what God is saying through the Apostle about the Messiah in John 1:1 or anywhere in the first chapter of John. They also don't realize that the *'ate'* in Gen. 1:1 is not like the *'ate'* in John 1:1. At best, it's a very superficial play on words with no connection to biblical interpretation. At worst it's a subtle deception that leads one astray into Kabbalah and eventually renouncing Yeshua as the Messiah.

The word *'ate'* is found in only *some* versions of John 1:1 but it's not the so-called mystical *Alef Tav* of Gen. 1:1 even though it's spelled the same way. The *'ate'* in John 1:1 is an entirely different Hebrew word that means 'with.' This is an insurmountable hurdle for those who espouse the doctrine of the *Alef Tav* because only the non-translatable *'ate'* can mystically symbolize God or Messiah. Somehow this seems to have eluded those who teach it. John 1:1 states, 'In the beginning was the Word, and the Word

¹ The phrase in Hebrew is אֲנִי רִשׁוֹן וְאֲנִי אַחֲרִיט. Yahveh is saying, 'I am First and I am Last.' There is no אֶת (*'ate'*) in the verse.

² Gen. 1:3, 6, 9, 11, 14-15, 20, 22, 24, 26, 28-29.

was *with* God, and the Word was God.’

I have six Hebrew New Testaments that stem from two different sources.³ The Bible Society in Israel doesn’t use the word *alef tav* to translate ‘with’ in the phrase, ‘and the Word was *with* God.’ The other source comes from a translation of 19th century German theologian Franz Delitzsch who used the word *alef tav* to translate ‘with’ in verse one. (Delitzsch used a different Hebrew word for ‘with’ in v. 2; *ate-zel*; no relation to ‘ate’, while The Bible Society used אע (*eem*) in both verses one and two).

Delitzsch’s use of ‘ate’ in verse one was not as the sign of the definite direct object, but as a preposition (with). This is important because those who teach Yeshua as the ‘ate’ of Gen. 1:1 speak of the ‘ate’ as the marker for the definite direct object which ‘has no meaning’ (non-translatable) and so mystically it ‘opens itself up to contain Messiah.’ Franz Delitzsch’s ‘ate’ of John 1:1 has meaning though. It’s an entirely different word even though it’s spelled the same way. Just as the English word ‘bark’ can refer to a tree or a dog, and the word ‘bank’ can refer to a financial institution or the land next to a river, so the two letter word *alef tav* has more than one meaning.

The word *alef-tav* can represent the word ‘with’ and it can also mean ‘a ploughshare’ and it also can stand for the word ‘you’ (feminine, singular). It can also be used as the sign of the definite direct object.⁴ The two Hebrew letters *alef-tav* have four different meanings.⁵

The Apostle John cannot be presenting Yeshua as the kabbalistic *Alef-Tav* for these three reasons:

1. In Franz Delitzsch’s translation of John 1:1 the *alef-tav* is *not* the sign of the definite direct object and so it doesn’t lend itself to symbolizing the mystical *Alef-Tav*.
2. Even this ‘ate’ that signifies ‘with’ doesn’t have to appear in the Hebrew translation of John as The Bible Society of Israel uses ‘*eem*.’
3. Nowhere does John call Yeshua the *Alef-Tav*. In Revelation, Yeshua isn’t presented as the *Alef-Tav*, but as *the Alef and the Tav* (the First and the Last, the Beginning and the End; Rev. 22:13; see also 1:8, 17; 21:6).

³ התורה נביאים כתובים והברית החדשה (*The Torah, Prophets, Writings and The New Covenant*), (Jerusalem: The Bible Society of Israel, 1991), p. 115. The first use of ‘*et*’ doesn’t appear till v. 14. This holds true for their 1976 translation and also their 2000 edition. Their newest release, ספר הבריתות *English-Hebrew Bible* (Jerusalem: Bible Society in Israel, 2006), p. 148 does not have an ‘ate’ for verse one or two either. The translation of noted 19th century German theologian Franz Delitzsch has an ‘ate’ for the word ‘with’ in Jn. 1:1. It’s found in two New Testament versions: *HaBrit HaHadasha Hebrew-English New Covenant* (Powder Springs, GA, USA: Hope of Israel Publications, 2003), p. 182, and *Hebrew-English New Testament* (Middlesex, England: The Society for the Distribution of Hebrew Scriptures, no copyright date), p. 182. What we have here is a subjective judgment call on the part of the translator (to use either the Hebrew ‘*eem*’ or ‘ate’ for the Greek word *pros*, ‘with’). We don’t really know which word John would have used if he would have written his account in Hebrew (which he didn’t do).

⁴ Benjamin Davidson, *The Analytical Hebrew and Chaldee Lexicon* (Grand Rapids, Michigan: Zondervan Publishing House, 1979), p. 54.

⁵ According to Bible Master, a Hebrew software program, the two letters *alef-tav* occur 7,084 times in the Tanach. Most of them are the sign of the definite direct object and have no ability ‘to connect’ to Messiah. For instance, randomly opening the Torah to Lev. 13:50 ‘*et*’ (a form of ‘ate’) precedes the phrase ‘the mildew’. In v. 52 it precedes ‘the clothing’ and ‘the knitted’, etc. Again randomly opening the Torah to Ex. 2:15, ‘*et*’ precedes ‘this thing’ referring to when Pharaoh heard that Moses had killed an Egyptian.

Yahveh never refers to Himself or Messiah in the Tanach as the *Alef-Tav*. It's also never used of Yeshua in the New Covenant. Perhaps God put it in places to symbolize Messiah? In Zech. 12:10, the Prophet speaks of the One who would be *pierced through* which of course is Yeshua. Kabbalistic Messianics, and those who don't realize it, take the 'ate' that is in the sentence and say this symbolizes Messiah. The English phrase, 'Me whom' (they pierced), has an 'ate' in it. The phrase is, 'ae-lie' (Me), 'ate' (the sign of the definite direct object), and 'ah-sheer' (whom), but as note five explains, 'ate' is found in more than seven thousand places in the Tanach and the fact that one happens to also be in Zechariah within a sentence that deals with Messiah is no more indication of it symbolizing Him than the letter 'e' of 'Messiah' appearing in the word *edge, equipment* or *epilepsy*, etc., means that they speak of Messiah. 'Ate' is only a grammatical device, a sign of the definite direct object, not a 'sign' of the Messiah.

John 1:1 presents 'the Word of God' not the kabbalistic *Alef-Tav*. It's not as though John had found out Who the alleged *Alef-Tav* of Genesis 1:1 was and is now telling us. John begins his account of the life of Yeshua by aligning his first phrase ('In the Beginning') with that of Gen. 1:1 to relate who the Word of Gen. 1:3 was. John never alludes to Yeshua as being the 'ate' or *Alef-Tav* of Gen. 1:1 as some incorrectly teach but the *Word* that was 'in the Beginning.' John had found *the Davar* (Hebrew for the Word) of Genesis and Exodus.

What Word (*Davar*) was John referring to? Today, 2,000 years later, we know Yeshua as the Word of God (Rev. 19:13), but when John wrote it he was presenting this Word *as* Yeshua. The Word came first. What Word? John was building upon an already established biblical concept *to introduce Yeshua as the Word*. Where is this Word in the Tanach (Hebrew Bible)? The Hebraic perspective helps us to understand what John was presenting.

What Word was 'in the Beginning'?

In John 1:4-5 the Apostle brings in another concept to associate with this Word that was with God and was God (v. 1) and had 'created everything' (v. 3). He states that the Word was also the Light (vv. 4-5). He emphasizes that John the Baptist was not the Light (v. 8) and re-emphasizes that this Word is the 'true Light' (v. 9).

John digresses for a moment and tells us that Yeshua's own people, the Jewish people as a nation, did not receive Him and then goes on to write more about this Word and Light. In John 1:14 he states,

'And the Word became flesh and dwelt among us and we beheld His Glory, the Glory as of the only begotten of the Father, full of Grace and Truth.'

What Word became flesh? What Word is John now referring to in v. 14? He hasn't even told us yet the name of the person he's writing about. That won't happen till v. 17. What 'Word' preceded Yeshua that symbolized Him? What 'Word' held tremendous value for the Jewish people and could be used by John to refer to Yeshua as the Word?

In v. 14 John is speaking about the Word of God written on two Stone Tablets called the Ten Commandments which represented all God's words given to Israel; His Torah. The Stone Tablets pictured Yeshua as the eternal Word of God. Stone symbolizes permanence or eternity (of God's Word; Is. 40:8; 1st Peter 1:24-25, etc.). The Ten Commandments and the other Commandments were first *spoken* by God and *then* written down. It was God's spoken Word, symbolized and written in the Ten Commandments on stone, that became flesh. John draws us back to the days of Moses and the Tabernacle, something that was in the

heart of all Israel to explain Who this Yeshua really is: *the* Word of God in flesh. This understanding is confirmed by other phrases that John used in v. 14.

John says the Word ‘dwelt among us’ (v. 14). This is the same concept that Yahveh uses for the reason to build the Tabernacle. In Ex. 25:8 Yahveh says to Moses, ‘Let them make Me a Sanctuary that I might *dwell* among them.’ The Greek word for dwelt in John 1:14 literally means, ‘to pitch a tent, encamp; to tabernacle’ with the lexicon using John 1:14 as a reference for its meaning ‘to tabernacle’ or to ‘dwell’.⁶

The fleshly body of Messiah was the Sanctuary or dwelling place on Earth for Yahveh when Yeshua was here (Jn. 14:1-11). This is what John is saying which obviously points directly to the Tabernacle of Moses, the place where Yahveh *dwelt* in the midst of Israel, over the Stone Tablets with His spoken Words engraved on them by His own Finger (Ex. 31:18; Dt. 9:10).

John further emphasizes that it’s the Ark of the Covenant with the Stone Tablets in it by saying in the same verse that ‘we beheld His Glory’. This refers to the Shekinah Glory Cloud that was above the Stone Tablets in the Ark of the Covenant for forty years in the Wilderness (Ex. 40:34-38). The Glory Cloud was the visible Presence of the invisible God *dwelling* or *tabernacling* among Israel and was seen for forty years by all the Hebrews. John is saying that he saw that *Glory dwelling* in Yeshua.

The Greek word for glory is *doxsa* from which we get doxology meaning to praise and *glorify* God. It’s found many times in reference to the Glory Cloud of God overshadowing the Tabernacle and also speaks of the Glory of Yahveh Himself (Ex. 24:16, 17; 40:34, 35, etc.). This Greek word for glory is found in the Greek Septuagint (the Tanach in Greek, made about 250 years before Yeshua was born in Bethlehem). The Hebrew word is *kavod*.

The Greek phrase for ‘full of grace and truth’ is translated by both The Bible Society of Israel and Franz Delitzsch as מְלֵא חֶסֶד וְאֱמֶת (*malay hesed veh’ehmet*). In the Torah, Yahveh defines what His Holy Name means. Exodus 34:6-7 reads:

‘Then Yahveh passed by in front of him and proclaimed, ‘Yahveh, Yahveh God! Compassionate and gracious, slow to anger and abounding in forgiving– loving–kindness and truth, who keeps forgiving–loving–kindness for thousands, who forgives iniquity, transgression and sin.’

Hesed (the word seen as grace in Jn. 1:14) is best translated as ‘forgiving–loving–kindness.’ Sometimes it’s defined as ‘covenant love’ because of the ideas of devotion, steadfastness and loyalty that reflect its various usages in Scripture. *Hesed* is love in action and not just an emotion (Gen. 24:12; 2nd Sam. 2:5; Ruth 3:10). *Ehmet* means ‘truth,’ but can be seen to be fidelity, firmness or faithfulness ‘something proven that can stand...something solid that we can ‘lean upon’ or trust.’⁷

When the two words occur together as in John 1:14, 17, they form what is called a *hendiadys*. Hebrew scholars explain this as a figure of speech in which two nouns form a single concept. They mean something like ‘true loyalty’ or ‘faithful, forgiving love’ or ‘reliable steadfastness.’ Yahveh’s Name, as defined in Exodus 34:6, connotes His faithful, lasting or firm love and it’s preeminently the Torah that reveals this quality of His character as He relates to Israel by His actions (freeing her from slavery), and His Words (the Torah or the Law, which is literally His Instruction or Teaching for Israel in how they were to live in

⁶ Wesley J. Perschbacher, Editor, *The New Analytical Greek Lexicon* (Peabody, MA: Hendrickson Publications, 1990), pp. 372, 174.

⁷ מְלֵא חֶסֶד וְאֱמֶת *Hesed veh’Ehmet* by Paul B. Sumner, edited by Avram Yehoshua, an unpublished paper, p. 1.

covenant with Him and each other).

Hesed v'Emet would become a slogan in the Hebrew Bible and is used often in the Psalms by King David:

‘All the paths of Yahveh are forgiving–loving–kindness and truth.’ (Ps. 25:10)

‘God will send forth His forgiving–loving–kindness and His truth.’ (Ps. 57:3)

‘He (the King), will abide before God forever and appoint forgiving–loving–kindness and truth, that they may preserve Him.’ (Ps. 61:7)

Likewise, the Davidic Messiah declares: ‘I have not concealed Your *hesed* and Your *emet* from the great congregation’. ‘Your *hesed* and Your *emet* preserve Me.’ (Ps. 40:10-11)

In Isaiah 16:5 it’s written that, ‘A Throne will be established in *hesed*, and a Judge will sit on it in *emet* in the Tent of David’. The Messiah from the royal House of David would establish His kingship upon the character of Yahveh.

John 1:14 points to the Tabernacle of Moses with the Word of God on the Stone Tablets, the Shekinah Glory Cloud dwelling over them in the midst of Israel, the physical representation of Yahveh and His awesome character. This is the Word that John is speaking of in v. 14. And only in v. 17 will he give us the name of the Word: Yeshua the Messiah. Yeshua is the embodiment of all this. But there’s nothing to point us to Yeshua as the alleged *Alef-Tav*.

This Word was also the Light ‘in the Beginning’ as John declares (vv. 4, 5, 7, 8, 9) and this takes us back to Genesis One but not verse 1 with ‘*ate*’ but verse 3 with ‘light’. God’s very first *words* recorded in Scripture were literally, ‘Be Light!’ (Come forth Light!) In English it states, ‘Then God said, “Let there be light.” And there was light.’ God was commanding the Light to come forth, something Yeshua speaks of Himself (Jn. 8:42; 13:3; 16:27; 17:8).

Messiah is the (first or True) Light of Creation (Jn. 1:4; 8:12; etc.). Messiah was not created, but begotten.⁸ The other lights, the sun, moon and stars are only pale reflections of Him. Many ancient and medieval Rabbis correctly saw this first light as the Light of Messiah. Notice that there is nothing created on the first day...no sun, moon, stars or earth so this first light is not the light of the sun, etc. What light is it? It’s Messiah as the True Light.⁹ Rachmiel Frydland writes that,

‘Orthodox rabbis of past centuries considered Messiah to be the center of the whole creation. The Messiah is discussed in the context of the ‘light’ in the Genesis creation account. According to the rabbis, this special light was ‘formed ‘before the sun, moon and stars. The *Yalkut*, a rabbinic medieval anthology, says,’

‘And God saw the Light, that it was good.’ This is the Light of Messiah, ‘to teach you that God saw the generation of Messiah and His works before He created the universe’ (*Yalkut* on Isaiah 60’).¹⁰

⁸ Ps. 2:2, 6-7; John 1:14, 18; 3:16, 18; 1st Jn. 4:9. Anything begotten is a reflection of that which begot it. Adam and Eve were created, but all other human beings were begotten in the image and likeness of Adam and Eve. Yeshua was begotten in the image of His Father and as such, shares in His Father’s nature or deity. See *Yeshua—God the Son* at <http://seedofabraham.net/Yeshua-God-the-Son.pdf> for more on this.

⁹ Isaiah 9:2; 45:7; 49:6; 60:20; Mt. 4:16; Jn. 1:7; 3:19, 21; 8:12; 9:5; 12:35; Acts 9:3; 22:6, 9, 11, 13; 2nd Cor. 4:6; Col. 1:12; 1st Tim. 6:16; 1st Pet. 2:9; 1st Jn. 1:5; 8:12; Rev. 22:5, etc.

Man was made in the Image of God and this is the key to understanding how both Yeshua and the Father are not only ‘one’ but also deity. He was revealing that Yeshua was the Light of Genesis, the Light of the very Beginning, and the Glory–Light of the Cloud over the Tabernacle in the book of Exodus, the very Presence of Yahveh in Israel, as well as the Living Word of God made flesh (symbolized in both the Ten Commandments on Stone and God’s first *words* recorded in Scripture).

This is the ‘*Davar*’ (Word) that was ‘in the Beginning’ of John 1:1. The Apostle makes no mention of any *Alef–Tav* here to draw a parallel with the ‘*ate*’ of Genesis. There is no direct parallel with it anywhere in the New Covenant, not even in Revelation.

Also, in all of John’s first chapter where the Apostle brings out many designations or titles of Yeshua, not once does John refer to Yeshua as the *Alef–Tav*, or the First and the Last, or the Beginning and the End. If the ‘*ate*’ (*alef–tav*) was John or the Holy Spirit’s way of alerting us to the alleged ‘hidden meaning of the *alef–tav* in Gen. 1:1’ representing Yeshua, it’s ironic that it’s never once written out or even alluded to. Nowhere in Scripture does God say that He (or Messiah) is the ‘*ate*’ or *Alef–Tav*. Conceptually They are, but this cannot be forced into the kabbalistic play on words of Gen. 1:1 or John 1:1. Those holding this view don’t realize these things.

There are divine plays on words or concepts associated with Yeshua that do have a biblical base. For instance, Matthew writes that the Prophets called Messiah a Nazarene. Now nowhere in Scripture is Messiah Yeshua seen as a Nazarite (one who takes the Vow not to drink wine, etc., Num. 6), even though some folks try and tell us that Yeshua was one. They wrongly take it from Matthew 2:23. What is Matthew the tax collector alluding to?

Matthew is speaking of the branch that budded, blossomed and bore almonds that God used to show all Israel who was His Chosen High Priest (Num. 16–17). This ‘branch’ or staff was ‘picked up’ by the Prophets and used to symbolize God’s Righteous Branch (i.e. a title for the Messiah; Jer. 23:5; Zech. 6:12-13; Is. 11:1, etc.). Branch or sprout, etc., was anciently used to signify an heir or a son and even today we talk of our family *tree*. The concept of a branch is seen in different Hebrew words (e.g. *shoresh* [root], and *naetzair* [sprout, branch]). Matthew just told us that Yeshua was raised in Nazareth,

“and came and lived in a city called Nazareth. This was to fulfill what was spoken through the Prophets: ‘He shall be called a Nazarene.’” (Mt. 2:23)

Yeshua being a Nazarene has to do with the city he was raised in, not the Nazarite Vow in Numbers six. In Hebrew, Nazareth comes from נֶצֶר *naetz-zair* (shoot or branch)¹¹ so the play on words is that the Prophets said that Messiah would be called a branch, and anyone asking who Yeshua was would be told, Yeshua from Nazareth or conceptually, Yeshua the Branch.¹² The person taking the Nazarite Vow is a נָזִיר *nay-zir*, a completely different Hebrew word.¹³

Looking at ‘*ate*’ in Genesis, the first verse in Hebrew literally reads, ‘In the Beginning, created God the Heavens and the Earth.’ There are two places where the definite direct object marker ‘*ate*’ is found in this verse. One is right before ‘the Heavens’ and the other is right before ‘the Earth.’ Putting ‘Yeshua’ where

¹⁰ Rachmiel Frydland, Author, Elliot Klayman, Editor, *What the Rabbis Know About the Messiah* (Cincinnati, OH: Messianic Publishing Company, 1993), p. 3-4.

¹¹ Davidson, *The Analytical Hebrew and Chaldee Lexicon*, p. 560.

¹² For the glorious reality behind this see *The Branch* at <http://seedofabraham.net/The-Branch.pdf>.

¹³ Davidson, *The Analytical Hebrew and Chaldee Lexicon*, p. 542.

the *ate*'s are gives us this:

‘In the Beginning God created Yeshua the Heavens and Yeshua the Earth.’

This not only makes the sentence incoherent, it implies that Yeshua was created, an extremely heretical concept which goes directly against John 1:1 with its, ‘and the Word was God.’ God was never created...neither the Father nor the Son nor the Holy Spirit.

Teaching that ‘*ate*’ is Yeshua and therefore that Yeshua is seen twice in the first verse of Genesis displays an ignorance for linguistic as well as theological reality. There is no direct parallel with ‘*ate*’ and Yeshua in either Gen. 1:1 or John 1:1, but there is much concerning Yeshua as the Light of Gen. 1:3 that, together with His Father (v. 1 ‘God’), and the Spirit of God (v. 2), created everything (vv. 6-31) as John tells us in John 1:1-3, 10.

Biblical commentators strive to find out what the biblical text is saying. That’s called exegesis; taking out of the text what is in it. There’s another ‘teaching method’ and I use that phrase pejoratively and that is eisegesis; projecting into a text something that is not there, but only within one’s mind.¹⁴ People who use eisegesis project their false ideas and theology onto the biblical text, using the biblical text to give their erroneous and deceptive doctrines ‘the authority of Scripture.’

In the first chapter of John, the Apostle was introducing his readers to someone whom he only first names in 1:17 as Yeshua the Messiah. John points to Him throughout the first chapter with biblically divine conceptual pictures, but the *Alef-Tav* is not one of them:

1. Yeshua is the Word (v. 1) that was ‘in the Beginning’ (v. 1). The very first Words of God recorded in Scripture are, ‘Be (come *forth*) Light!’ Yeshua is literally the Word of Yahveh which became Living Light.
 - a. Yeshua is the Light of men and the True Light (vv. 4, 9).
2. Yeshua is the Word that is deity (v. 1) and therefore equal with God His Father.
3. Yeshua is the Word that made everything (v. 3) the Co-Creator.
4. Yeshua is Life and that Life is the Light of Man (v. 4).
5. Yeshua is the One to whom faith produces true sonship with God (v. 12).
6. Yeshua is the Word that became flesh (v. 14) spoken from Mt. Sinai and pictured on the Stone Tablets, which were placed in the Ark of the Covenant.
7. Yeshua is the Glory that was the Holy Spirit Glory Cloud over the Tabernacle (v. 14), God’s visible Presence on Earth.
8. Yeshua is the only begotten Son of God the Father (vv. 14, 18, 34, 49). ‘Only’ should be translated as ‘unique’ or ‘uniquely’ begotten. This is a direct reference to the miraculous son of promise, Isaac as the uniquely begotten son of Abraham.

Abraham had another son before Isaac (Ishmael) and so Isaac could not have been seen as the ‘only’ son

¹⁴ From Wikipedia at <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Eisegesis>: Eisegesis is ‘the process of interpretation of an existing text in such a way as to introduce one’s own ideas. This is best understood when contrasted with exegesis. While exegesis draws out the meaning from the text, eisegesis occurs when a reader reads his/her interpretation into the text. As a result, exegesis tends to be objective when employed effectively while eisegesis is regarded as highly subjective.

of Abraham but Ishmael came through natural means. Isaac was *unique* as he was promised by God and the uniqueness was seen in that Sarah was far too old to conceive. This makes Isaac not the ‘only’ son as many English translations inaccurately present in Gen. 22:2 (‘Take now your son, your only son Isaac’), but the unique son of Father Abraham (Rom. 4:12). Gen. 22:2 should be translated, ‘Take now your son, your unique son.’ Isaac pictures the miraculous conception of Yeshua in the womb of Miryam and as Isaac’s conception was unique, so too was Yeshua’s for He was the Promised Messiah (Is. 7:14). Jn. 1:18 should read, ‘The uniquely begotten Son.’¹⁵ We are all sons and daughters of God, but Yeshua is uniquely God’s Son.

9. Yeshua is the living embodiment of Yahveh’s character and nature (v. 14).
10. Yeshua is the One who existed before John the Baptist. This speaks of Yeshua’s pre-existence (Micah 5:2).
11. Yeshua is the *Hesed* (Forgiving–Loving–Kindness) and the *Ehmet* (Truth) of God (v. 17), God’s very Being, character and actions or deeds toward Israel. (For *hesed*; Ex. 34:6; Ps. 25:10; 26:3; 31:5, etc. For Truth; Ps. 84:11; Jer. 31:2; Zech. 4:7, etc.)

The King James Bible wrongly inserts the conjunction ‘but’ into the translation which denigrates the Law: ‘For the Law was given by Moses *but* grace and truth came by Jesus Christ.’

John wasn’t contrasting the glorious Law or Words of God reflected on Stone and parchment that was to be a blessing for Israel (Dt. 4:5-8) with Jesus. The Law or Torah is a *Book of Hesed* and *Ehmet* revealing God’s glory and love for Israel. On the contrary, John was saying,

‘The Torah (the Book of *Hesed* and *Ehmet*) was given through Moses; the *Hesed* and the *Ehmet* (spoken of in the Book) came (into being) through Yeshua the Messiah.’

God’s character of *hesed* and *ehmet* pervade the Torah This was seen by John in Yeshua as the next verse says that Yeshua *reveals* the Father (v. 18). Moses was the faithful mediator or ‘go-between’ revealing Yahveh to Israel. Yeshua embodied what Moses wrote of, further revealing the great *hesed* and *ehmet* of the Father for Israel through the Person and Work, love, compassion, healings and sacrifice of the Son.

12. In Yeshua is the Lord (Yahveh; v. 23) referring to their oneness and Yahveh dwelling within Yeshua. (Yahveh is the name of the God of Israel occurring approximately 7,000 times in the Hebrew Bible. Unfortunately it’s presented in English as a title; the Lord with the o–r–d usually in small capital letters which hides the fact that His Name is Yahveh.
13. Yeshua is the Lamb of God that takes away the sin of the world (vv. 29, 35). Yeshua is the Sacrifice that frees us from sin and Satan’s Kingdom. This is similar to the way the lamb at the first Passover in Egypt saved the firstborn of the Hebrews from death. After that Pharaoh told Israel to leave (from under his authority and kingdom).
14. Yeshua is the Immerser or Baptizer in the Spirit of Yahveh (v. 33).
15. Yeshua is the Rabbi (v. 38) who came to show us and to teach us Who Yahveh is (Jn. 12:45; 14:6-11). As the Rabbi–Teacher He is the Living Example of one who loves God and Man with all His heart and who walks in all the Torah that applies to Him (and He was never legalistic about it). He also shows us the love that our Father has for us in every healing that He does, every blind

¹⁵ See *The Mosaic Sacrifices and the Blood of Jesus* at <http://seedofabraham.net/Mosaic-Sacrifice-and-the-Blood-of-Jesus.pdf> for more on the conception of Yeshua in the womb of Miryam.

eye that He opens, every demon He casts out, every sinner He forgives and every person that He raised from the dead. Yeshua truly reveals the power and the compassion of the Father (Jn. 14:8-11).

16. Yeshua is the long awaited Jewish Messiah (v. 41). There were many ‘Messiahs’ or Christs in the ancient pagan world who also offered salvation to people, but only Yeshua is the True Savior.
17. Yeshua is the King of Israel (v. 49; Mt. 27:11; Lk. 1:30-33; etc.).
18. Yeshua is the Son of Man (v. 51), Daniel’s heavenly Messiah who receives an eternal dominion or kingdom from the Ancient of Days (the Father) in Daniel 7:9-14. This Son of Man interestingly enough comes on the Clouds of Heaven, the Shekinah Glory Cloud.

Another Messianic title is the ‘One who would come on the Glory Clouds.’ This is seen in Yeshua’s trial before the High Priest and Sanhedrin:

“And the High Priest stood up and said to Him, ‘Do You make no answer?! What is it that these men are testifying against You?!’ But Yeshua kept silent. And the High Priest said to Him, ‘I adjure You by the Living God that You tell us whether You are the Messiah, the Son of God!’ Yeshua said to him, ‘You have said it yourself. Nevertheless I tell you, hereafter you shall see the Son of Man sitting at the right hand of the Power and coming on the (Glory) Clouds of Heaven.’” (Mt. 26:62-63)

19. Yeshua is also presented as the One that Father Jacob saw that day when Jacob went to sleep and saw the ladder where the angels of God were *ascending and descending*. Yeshua tells them that they too would see those same Heavens opened up and the angels of God ascending and descending upon the Son of Man. Scripture only uses the phrase ‘ascending and descending’ in two places; one, where it’s said that Yakov (Jacob) saw the angels ascending and descending and in this cite of John’s (1:51).

It’s not written that the angels were *descending* from Heaven first and *then ascending* as one might normally think of the scene with Jacob (Gen. 28:12-13) but that the angels were first ascending and then descending. The English of Gen. 28:13 states that ‘the Lord stood above it’ and we’re to understand from most commentators that the Lord stood above the ladder (i.e. that God was in Heaven), but Hebrew grammar reveals that God was on the Earth standing above Jacob. The word for ‘it’ in Hebrew actually means ‘him.’ Translators using ‘it’ to refer to the ladder are grammatically correct, but biblically wrong. It’s not the ladder that the preposition refers to, but Yahveh. The angels of God *ascending* first show us where God was, standing over Jacob on the ground next to him. If God were above the ladder in Heaven the angels would be described as descending first from Him.

Yeshua was standing over Jacob and the angels were leaving Yeshua, ascending to the Heavens and descending back to Him. And that’s what Yeshua speaks of that day to Nathanael. That same parade of angels would be seen by the Apostles as Yeshua Himself says in John 1:51, ascending from Him and descending back down to Him. God in the form of Man was now standing upon the Earth. What Father Yakov (Jacob) had seen and later called the House of God (i.e. the *dwelling* place of God, another reference back to the Tabernacle or dwelling place of God), the Apostles would know as Yeshua. No wonder Yeshua says in Mt. 13:17,

‘For truly I say to you that many prophets and righteous men desired to see what you see and did not see it, and to hear what you hear and did not hear it.’

As for Yakov naming the place where he saw Yeshua, Scripture records that,

“He was afraid and said, ‘How awesome is this place! This is none other than the House of God and this is the Gate of Heaven!’” (Gen. 28:17)

The term ‘Gate of Heaven’ is a designation that Yeshua uses of Himself (John 10:1, 7, 9). A gate, like a door, allows one to come and go from a house or field. Yeshua is the One who acts like a gate, allowing us to come into the Sheepfold of the Father.

Finally, to cement for us that Yeshua is referring to Father Yakov’s experience, we hear Yeshua say that Nathanael is a ‘guileless’ Israeli (v. 47). The name Yakov means a ‘deceiver and conniver’ for he certainly was but this is Good News for all of us as we are all born with Yakov’s nature. Yakov connived his way to the birthright (Gen. 25:27-34) and deceived his father Isaac out of the blessing that should have gone to his older twin brother Esau (Gen. 27:1-46), but God knew that Yakov’s heart would bend for Him and God changed his name to Israel.

Israel means one who strives or wrestles with God and man and is blessed. Yeshua calling Nathanael *guileless* or one in whom there is no deceit (Jn. 1:47) is the first of two references to Yakov (the second being Yeshua saying that they would see the angels of God ascending and descending upon the Son of Man; v. 51). God would make Yakov to be Israel and God would make all Yakov’s Sons to be like their Father Israel; guileless...without deceit for we all have our spiritual lineage from Abraham, Isaac and Israel (Ex. 32:13; see also 19:1, 6; 20:22; 24:17; Lv. 25:55: 27:2, 34, etc.). Yeshua was saying that Nathanael was truly a son of Father Israel.

Conclusion

The Apostle John paints an incredible mosaic of Who Yeshua is in his first chapter by introducing us to at least nineteen titles and concepts of Yeshua found in the Tanach about Him to reveal that Yeshua is no ordinary man, but the Word of God in flesh, the Creator, the Light, the Messiah, etc. Nowhere, though, in all these titles and descriptions, do we find any mention of Yeshua being the *Alef-Tav* or even the concept of Yeshua being the First and the Last or the Beginning and the End. It’s very strange, that if John was alluding to it in his first verse (that may or may not have even used ‘*ate*,’ and if it did, it wouldn’t be the mystical ‘*ate*’), that neither he, nor the Holy Spirit who was inspiring him to write his account, ever brings it out in the chapter. The *kabbalistic* concept of the *Alef-Tav* is not found in John 1:1.

The issue isn’t whether Yeshua is the *Alef-Tav* or the *Alef* and the *Tav*. He’s both as conceptually they’re the same. The issue is that neither Gen. 1:1, Zech. 12:10, nor John 1:1 declare Yeshua to be the so-called mystical *Alef-Tav*. There is no ‘hidden Messiah’ in the *alef-tav* at those or any other Scripture cites.¹⁶

¹⁶ Revised on 29 March 2016.