

Adonai on the Cross

Hebraic Word Study



Catherine M. Reeder

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By: Catherine M. Reeder

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Introduction

There are many mysteries hidden in the Bible that the average reader never sees. These mysteries can only be found when we look at the culture, belief systems, and language that God's chosen people use. Many things that we find confusing in the Old and New Testaments are actually full of symbolism that can only be understood through the Hebrew mindset. If we do not know their culture, we miss so many hidden connections between the Old and New Testaments, and we miss the true depth that God is offering us.

Two years ago, I was introduced to a new way of understanding and interpreting the Bible, and it opened my eyes to who Jesus really is. I had always known that there was *more*, but the more was something I never could have imagined. It was a doorway to new ways of thinking and seeing the world, and it has brought God and all He says into a brilliant understanding that seems unreal.

I don't have a degree. I don't have a high social status. I don't look like anyone who would be able to understand and teach the mysteries hidden in scripture, but here I am. Just as Jesus called nobodies and changed the world through them, here I am too. Jesus calls us to be disciples. That is what I am. A disciple who has met Jesus face-to-face and heard His call for me to step into a life of surrender to Him. I fail every single day, but He still calls me His.

I don't know all the plans He has for me, but I know He is calling me to teach and show this generation the wonders of His words and love, because that is who He is. Jesus *is* the Word. God *is* Love.

We know how much God loves us, and we have put our trust in his love.
God is love, and all who live in love live in God, and God lives in them. 17And as we live in God, our love grows more perfect. So we will not be afraid on the day of judgment, but we can face him with confidence because we live like Jesus here in this world.

- 1 John 4:16-17, NLT

Adonai on the Cross

In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God.
- John 1:1, NASB

When we read this passage, we know that John is calling Jesus the Word. This on its own is incredibly significant, but there is something more to this passage that can be found when we look at Genesis 1:1.

In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth.
- Genesis 1:1, NASB

We have heard this verse a thousand times, and you probably memorized it in Sunday School, but there is something hidden in this verse that John is trying to tell us.

Note: Hebrew is written right to left instead of left to right as English is. Start at 'In the beginning,' and read backwards. It takes some time to get used to!

בְּרֵאשִׁית בָּרָא אֱלֹהִים אֶת הַשָּׁמַיִם וְאֶת הָאָרֶץ
In the beginning created God - the heavens and the earth

We see that in the Hebrew, there is a small word at the center of this sentence that is not translated into English. This word is made up of two letters. The Aleph and the Tav. Each letter in the Hebrew language has meaning just as the whole word does, and the letters point back to the meaning of the word.

‘êṭ’

אֶת

aleph (1/1) – oneness, thousand; strong; power; leader; who/what is first; oneness and unity with God; Adonai/Yahweh; to teach, discipline, tame; ox head, bull

tav (22/400) – to mark with truth; to make a sign; to seal; ownership; finished, whole, complete; make a covenant; join two things together; divine perfection; cross **†**

As you can see, reading through the meanings of these two letters, the Aleph is a picture of Adonai or God, and the Tav is a picture of the cross and covenant. When you put these letters together, it becomes a picture of God on the cross so that we may live in covenant with Him!

When John said, “In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God” (John 1:1), he was pointing back to this word in Genesis 1:1, which is a picture of Jesus on the cross. Jesus was already in the beginning, before mankind even needed to be saved. God already had a plan to save all of humanity.

But this isn’t the only place the Aleph-Tav is used in the Bible. It is used in over 10,000 places in the Old Testament. But let's look at a verse where it’s used in Zechariah:

“And I will pour out on the house of David and on the inhabitants of Jerusalem, the Spirit of grace and of supplication, so that they will look on Me whom they have pierced; and they will mourn for Him, as one mourns for an only son, and they will weep bitterly over Him, like the bitter weeping over a first-born.”

- Zechariah 12:10, NASB

This verse is a direct prophecy about Jesus, the first-born son of God, being pierced on the cross. And in the exact center of this verse is the Aleph-Tav.

וְשָׁפַקְתִּי	עַל-	בֵּית	דָּוִד	וְעַל	יֹשְׁבֵי	יְרוּשָׁלַם	רוּחַ	חַן
And I will pour	on	the house	of David	and on	the inhabitants	of Jerusalem	the Spirit	of grace
וְתַחֲנוּנִים	וְהִבִּיטוּ	אֵלַי	אֶת	אֲשֶׁר-	דָּקְרוּ	וְסָפְדוּ	עָלָיו	
and supplication	then they will look	on Me	-	whom	they pierced	and Yes they will mourn	for Him	
כְּמִסְפָּד	עַל-	הַיָּחִיד	וְהִמָּר	עָלָיו	כְּהֶמָר	עַל-	הַבְּכוֹר:	
for as one mourns	for	[his] only [son]	and grieve	for Him	as one grieves	for	a firstborn	

There are 12 Hebrew words before the Aleph-Tav and 12 after. The 12th letter in the Hebrew alphabet is the Lamed, which is a picture of the Shepherd’s staff.

The Lamed has a value of 30 (*each Hebrew letter has a numeric value*), which is how old Jesus was when He was baptized and began His public ministry. This is when the spirit of grace or the Holy Spirit was poured out on Him.

Jesus, God on the cross, was in the center of the prophecy that was told about Him hundreds of years before He was crucified, and the Lamed also confirms the age of the Shepherd (John 10:11) when He was anointed by the Holy Spirit and called the Son of God, which is also seen in this verse “as one mourns for his only son.”

But there's more! If we look back at Genesis 1:1, we can see that the Aleph-Tav is also at the exact center of this verse.

בְּרֵאשִׁית בָּרָא אֱלֹהִים אֶת הַשָּׁמַיִם וְאֶת הָאָרֶץ:
In the beginning created God - the heavens and the earth

There are three letters before, and three after. The third letter in the Hebrew alphabet is the Gimel, which is a picture of the Trinity and God's loving-kindness. Another reminder that God is three in one (Matthew 28:19) and that He had a plan from the beginning to show how much He loves us.

For God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son,
that whoever believes in Him shall not perish, but have eternal life.

- John 3:16, NASB

There are seven words total in this verse. The seventh letter of the Hebrew alphabet is the Zayin, which means *to rest; to cut, to pierce; perfection, and completion*.

Without the Aleph-Tav, Jesus, there would be no rest or completion, and the plan for the New Covenant would not have come to pass. There wouldn't have been perfection through Jesus, by Him being pierced on the cross. Once again, this points back to the prophecy in Zechariah 12:10: "so that they will look on Me whom they have pierced."

Beginning and End

Revelation 1:8 says:

“I am the Alpha and the Omega,” says the Lord God,
who is and who was and who is to come, the Almighty.”
- Revelation 1:8, NASB

Alpha is the first letter of the *Greek* alphabet, and Omega is the last.

Note: The Old Testament was written in Hebrew, and the New Testament was written in Greek. However, many of the people we read about in the New Testament spoke Hebrew or Aramaic in everyday life. So when we compare the Greek text with its underlying Hebrew roots, we can often uncover deeper meaning.

Revelation 22:13 says:

“I am the Alpha and the Omega, the first and the last, the beginning and the end.”
- Revelation 22:13, NASB

The first letter of the Hebrew alphabet is the Aleph, and the last letter is the Tav. When God says He is the Alpha and the Omega, He is saying He is the Aleph-Tav. He is God on the cross.

The Aleph-Tav is in the first sentence of the Bible, and it is in the last book and chapter of the Bible. God is confirming that He is Jesus.

Note: Several translations use the Aleph-Tav instead of the Alpha and Omega in Revelation. One of these translations is the Complete Jewish Bible (CJB).

Revelation 21:6 supports this:

And He said to me, “It is done. I am the Alpha and the Omega, the beginning and the end.
I will give to the one who thirsts from the spring of the water of life without cost.”
- Revelation 21:6, NASB

Let’s break this verse down sentence by sentence.

“It is done.”

- Revelation 21:6, NASB

“It is finished!”

- John 19:30, NASB

“I am the Alpha and the Omega, the beginning and the end.”

- Revelation 21:6, NASB

He is the Aleph-Tav, God on the cross, who was the Word in the beginning (John 1:1, Genesis 1:1) and the end (Revelation 1:8, 21:6, & 22:13).

“I will give to the one who thirsts from the spring of the water of life without cost.”

- Revelation 21:6, NASB

Jesus answered and said to her, “Everyone who drinks of this water shall thirst again; but whoever drinks of the water that I shall give to him shall never thirst; but the water that I shall give to him shall become in him a well of water springing up to eternal life.”

- John 4:13-14, NASB

Jesus paid the price on the cross so that we may have eternal life without cost. He paid so that we don’t have to.

As we saw in Genesis 1:1, the Aleph-Tav is a reminder of the Trinity. In Revelation, God calls Himself the Alpha and the Omega three times; again, this is a picture of Jesus pointing back to the Trinity.

The third letter of the Hebrew alphabet, the Gimel, also means ‘something lifted up.’ Jesus was lifted up on the cross. But, Jesus also lifts up the Trinity in the beginning and the end. This is what humanity was meant to do from the beginning, but because sin entered the world, Jesus had to come and do it for us.

The Gimel also means “man walking.” We were meant to walk with God in the garden as seen in Genesis 3:8:

Now they heard the sound of the Lord God walking in the garden in the cool of the day, and the man and his wife hid themselves from the presence of the Lord God among the trees of the garden.

- Genesis 3:8, NASB

But because sin entered the world Jesus came to walk with God on earth so that we may follow Him and return to who He created us to be.

“And He who sent Me is with Me; He has not left Me alone, for I always do the things that are pleasing to Him.”

- John 8:29, NASB

Prophecies Fulfilled

Let's look back at Zechariah 12:10:

וְשָׁפַתִּי	עַל-	בֵּית	דָּוִיד	וְעַל	יֹשֵׁב	יְרוּשָׁלַם	רוּחַ	חַן
And I will pour	on	the house	of David	and on	the inhabitants	of Jerusalem	the Spirit	of grace
וְתַחֲנוּנִים	וְהִבִּיטוּ	אֵלַי	אֶת	אֲשֶׁר-	דָּקְרוּ	וְסָפְדוּ	עָלָיו	
and supplication	then they will look	on Me	-	whom	they pierced	and Yes they will mourn	for Him	
כְּמִסְפָּד	עַל-	הַיָּחִיד	וְהִמָּר	עָלָיו	כְּהִמָּר	עַל-	הַבְּכוֹר:	
for as one mourns	for	[his] only [son]	and grieve	for Him	as one grieves	for	a firstborn	

Note: Remember to read/count from right to left instead of left to right.

As we saw earlier, the Aleph-Tav is surrounded by 12 Hebrew words before and 12 after, making a total of 24 words surrounding it.

Revelation 4:4 says:

And around the throne were **twenty-four** thrones; and upon the thrones I saw **twenty-four** elders sitting, clothed in white garments, and golden crowns upon their heads.

- Revelation 4:4, NASB

The prophecy about who Jesus was, what He did, and when He did it, also points to the 24 elders who surround Him after His resurrection and ascension into heaven.

The **twenty-four** elders will fall down before Him who sits on the throne, and will worship Him who lives forever and ever, and will cast their crowns before the throne, saying,

“Worthy are You, our Lord and our God, to receive glory and honor and power; for You created all things, and because of Your will they existed, and were created.”

- Revelation 4:10-11, NASB

Once again, this is confirmation that says Jesus, the Aleph-Tav, God on the cross, was in the beginning and created all things. And now, in the end, all the elders and creatures in heaven bow down before Him in worship.

Finally, there's one more verse we need to look at that ties Zechariah to Revelation.

BEHOLD, HE IS COMING WITH THE CLOUDS, and every eye will see Him, *even those who pierced Him; and all the tribes of the earth will mourn over Him.* So it is to be. Amen

- Revelation 1:7, NASB

And I will pour out on the house of David and on the inhabitants of Jerusalem, the Spirit of grace and of supplication, *so that they will look on Me whom they have pierced; and they will mourn for Him, as one mourns for an only son, and they will weep bitterly over Him, like the bitter weeping over a first-born.*

- Zechariah 12:10, NASB

Revelation 1:7 confirms that the one they are speaking of in heaven is Jesus, the Messiah, and that the prophecy about the Messiah in Zechariah is the one they are speaking of in heaven. The verse that follows this confirmation is Revelation 1:8:

“I am the Alpha and the Omega,” says the Lord God,
“who is and who was and who is to come, the Almighty.”

- Revelation 1:8, NASB

These two verses are Jesus confirming what was spoken by Zechariah. He is the Son pierced, and He is God on the Cross. Scripture confirms that Jesus is, was, and is to come.

The first half of Revelation 1:7 is quoting Daniel 7:13-14.

Note: When text in certain translations is in all-caps, it is a reference to a verse or passage in the Old Testament.

BEHOLD, HE IS COMING WITH THE CLOUDS, and every eye will see Him, even those who pierced Him; and all the tribes of the earth will mourn over Him. So it is to be. Amen.

- Revelation 1:7, NASB

I kept looking in the night visions, *And behold, with the clouds of heaven One like a Son of Man was coming,* And He came up to the Ancient of Days And was presented before Him. And to Him was given dominion, Glory and a kingdom, That all the peoples, nations and men of every language Might serve Him. His dominion is an everlasting dominion Which will not pass away; And His kingdom is one Which will not be destroyed.

- Daniel 7:13-14, NASB

Again, we have a direct answer to prophecy in the Old Testament that Jesus is the Messiah. In one verse, Revelation 1:7, we see two prophecies referenced. In the very next verse, Revelation 1:8, we see God call Himself Aleph-Tav, God on the cross, Jesus. These two verses confirm that Jesus is God. It confirms that He was pierced and that He will be the one coming on the clouds. He is the one who has brought the gift of salvation to ALL mankind.

Conclusion

- Jesus was the Word at the beginning (John 1:1, Genesis 1:1).
- He is the Son of God, pierced on the cross (Zachariah 12:10).
- He is the beginning and the end (Revelation 1:8, Revelation 22:13, Revelation 21:6).
- He is the spring to eternal life (Revelation 21:6, John 4:13-14).
- He is the one enthroned in heaven, surrounded by the 24 elders (Revelation 4:4, Revelation 4:10-11).
- He is the one who shall come on the clouds (Revelation 1:7, Daniel 7:13-14)
- And He is the one worthy to open the scroll (Revelation 5).

Revelation 5:1-10, 12-14, NLT

Then I saw a scroll in the right hand of the one who was sitting on the throne. There was writing on the inside and the outside of the scroll, and it was sealed with seven seals. And I saw a strong angel, who shouted with a loud voice: "Who is worthy to break the seals on this scroll and open it?" But no one in heaven or on earth or under the earth was able to open the scroll and read it.

Then I began to weep bitterly because no one was found worthy to open the scroll and read it. But one of the twenty-four elders said to me, "Stop weeping! Look, the Lion of the tribe of Judah, the heir to David's throne, has won the victory. He is worthy to open the scroll and its seven seals."

Then I saw a Lamb that looked as if it had been slaughtered, but it was now standing between the throne and the four living beings and among the twenty-four elders. He had seven horns and seven eyes, which represent the sevenfold Spirit of God that is sent out into every part of the earth.

He stepped forward and took the scroll from the right hand of the one sitting on the throne. And when he took the scroll, the four living beings and the twenty-four elders fell down before the Lamb. Each one had a harp, and they held gold bowls filled with incense, which are the prayers of God's people. And they sang a new song with these words:

"You are worthy to take the scroll
and break its seals and open it.

For you were slaughtered, and your blood has ransomed people for God
from every tribe and language and people and nation.

And you have caused them to become

a Kingdom of priests for our God.
And they will reign on the earth.”
And they sang in a mighty chorus:
“Worthy is the Lamb who was slaughtered—
to receive power and riches
and wisdom and strength
and honor and glory and blessing.”

And then I heard every creature in heaven and on earth and under the earth and in the sea.
They sang:

“Blessing and honor and glory and power
belong to the one sitting on the throne
and to the Lamb forever and ever.”

And the four living beings said, “Amen!”

And the twenty-four elders fell down and worshiped the Lamb.

At the Center

Through it all, everything points back to Jesus and who He is. Every story, every word, every Psalm, points back to the one who came to ransom the slave and set them free (Matthew 20:28, Luke 4:18).

He is the Word. He gave up His life and soul so that you could have the freedom to live a life where you can truly be free and be your true, God-created self. You have the liberty to choose to follow Him and be freed from the oppression, depression, and cares of this world (Philippians 4:6-7, 1 Peter 5:7, Matthew 11:28).

This freedom comes when we follow Jesus as His disciples did. This means leaving everything behind. It means leaving friends and family behind if necessary. It means giving up the things you thought you couldn't live without. It means picking up your cross and following Him.

And He was saying to them all, "If anyone wishes to come after Me, he must deny himself, and take up his cross daily and follow Me."

- Luke 9:23, NASB

This is a daily journey of asking Him to lead and guide you and lay down the things that are not serving Him and His kingdom, or you. He wants you, His Beloved (Song of Solomon). He is for you and not against you (Romans 8:31). You are holy, righteous, and redeemed through Him who gives you strength (1 Corinthians 1:30-31, Philippians 4:13)!

Continue to lay those things down that you have been holding onto. Ask Him what it is you need to let go of. And if you have never done this before, or don't know if you believe or trust Him, ask Him to reveal who He truly is to you.

The world is a broken place. Everyone is telling you what truth is and what truth isn't. Everyone is telling you who God is and who He isn't. But have you ever asked Him who He is? Have you ever relied on God to tell you who He is instead of relying on people to tell you who He is?

Take some time to sit with Him and read His Word as He would have you read it. Allow Him to show you the mysteries that are hidden in it, that only He can reveal! Let Him be your shepherd today. Let Him lead you to His still waters (Psalm 23:2).

Jesus answered and said to him, "If anyone loves Me, he will follow My word; and My Father will love him, and We will come to him and make Our dwelling with him."

- John 14:23, NASB

Allow Jesus to dwell within you today. Let Him fill you to overflowing with His living water.
You will never go thirsty again.

Shalom Shalom, my friends.

What a Beautiful Name by Hillsong Worship

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