

The Centrality of Messiah in Jewish Theology

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1.

First Appearance

Gen 1:1-2

1 In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth.

Several hundred years before Yeshua's birth in the flesh, Yonatan ben Uziel, wrote in a targum (we would call that a "living Bible" today) of how the creation occurred. He said, "The Almighty was the architect, and King Messiah the builder." He simply restated the common understanding of our people regarding the appearance of Messiah in the dawn of creation.

We find the very same concept being said once again by John.

John 1:1-3

1 In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. 2 He was in the beginning with God. 3 All things came into being by Him, and apart from Him nothing came into being that has come into being.

It is not accidental that the first word of the Torah is "bereshit", and the first word of the gospel is "in the beginning." John is using the same word, invoking not only the dawn of creation, and associating it with Yeshua, but he is also endorsing the earlier theology that our people well understood, and applying it to Yeshua.

It is clear that G-d was the agent of creation, and we know that Messiah was the builder. But I wish for you to look at a curious linguistic quirk in the Hebrew language, the aleph-tav. 

הָאָרֶץ:	וְאֵת	הַשָּׁמַיִם	אֵת	אֱלֹהִים	בָּרָא	בְּרֵאשִׁית	1:1
the earth.	and	the Heaven		God	created	In the beginning	
<u>776</u>	<u>853</u>	<u>8064</u>	<u>853</u>	<u>430</u>	<u>1254</u>	<u>7225</u>	

It appears twice in the first verse. This particular word has no English translation, nor does it have a Hebrew meaning, other than it is used to connect the actor to the thing being acted upon.

In Genesis 1, the *aleph-tav* connects the creator with the creation, first with the heaven, and also then with the earth. The Hebrew letter vav ו that is appended to the second appearance of the *aleph-tav* in this verse is the Hebrew way of saying “and.” It is merely a connector which shows a continuation of that previous thought.

Rev 22:12-13

12 "Behold, I am coming quickly, and My reward is with Me, to render to every man according to what he has done. 13 "I am the aleph and the tav, the first and the last, the beginning and the end."

Note: Since both Yeshua and John were native Hebrew speakers, there is no doubt that they were speaking Hebrew to one another. There is no reason for Yeshua to interject a Greek term or letter into His Hebrew conversation. It would have meaning if He did, but not the fullness of meaning of the Hebrew. *Aleph* is the first letter of the alephbet, and *Tav* is the last letter.

In the pre-babylonian pictographic Hebrew, the *aleph* means “first, primary, head.” *tav* means “covenant.” So, combining those two meanings in this word, we can see He is saying that He is the “Head of the Covenant.”

Yeshua could have merely said He was the beginning and the end, and left it at that. Why did He need to three times repeat “*aleph* and the *tav*?” I believe it was because He wanted to identify for all time what His participation had been in creation. The Almighty was the architect, and Yeshua the builder. Yeshua made it clear that He was then and is now the  .

2.

Walking as a Man at the Oaks of Mamre

Gen 18:1-6

18 Now **the Lord appeared to him** by the oaks of Mamre, while he was sitting at the tent door in the heat of the day. 2 When he lifted up

his eyes and looked, behold, three men were standing opposite him; and when he saw them, he ran from the tent door to meet them and bowed himself to the earth, 3 and said, "**My Lord**, if now I have found favor in Your sight, please do not pass Your servant by. 4 "Please let a little water be brought and wash your feet, and rest yourselves under the tree; 5 and I will bring a piece of bread, that you may refresh yourselves; after that you may go on, since you have visited your servant." And they said, "So do, as you have said."

Gen 18:16-19

16 Then the men rose up from there, and looked down toward Sodom; and Abraham was walking with them to send them off. 17 **The Lord said, "Shall I hide from Abraham what I am about to do,** 18 since Abraham will surely become a great and mighty nation, and in him all the nations of the earth will be blessed?

Gen 18:22-23

22 Then the men turned away from there and went toward Sodom, while **Abraham was still standing before the Lord.**

In each instance of the word in English "Lord" in this passage, the four-letter name of G-d is used. But we know that one cannot see the face of G-d and live. Ex 33:20. And since we cannot see the Spirit of G-d, that only leaves one entity of the Triune G-d which Abraham encountered: Messiah.

After Messiah revealed Abraham negotiated with G-d regarding how many righteous would be in S'dom and it still be spared. 10 was the final negotiated number.

3.

Wrestling with Yacov

Gen 32:24-31

24 Then Jacob was left alone, and a man wrestled with him until daybreak. 25 When he saw that he had not prevailed against him, he touched the socket of his thigh; so the socket of Jacob's thigh was

dislocated while he wrestled with him. 26 Then he said, "Let me go, for the dawn is breaking." But he said, "I will not let you go unless you bless me." 27 So he said to him, "What is your name?" And he said, "Jacob." 28 **He said, "Your name shall no longer be Jacob, but Israel; for you have striven with God and with men and have prevailed."** 29 Then Jacob asked him and said, "Please tell me your name." But he said, "Why is it that you ask my name?" **And he blessed him there.** 30 **So Jacob named the place Peniel, for he said, "I have seen God face to face, yet my life has been preserved."**

Yacov recognized that he had just wrestled with G-d, but had lived. He knows that none can see the face of G-d and live, only he did. So, who did he wrestle with? It had to be Messiah. The most ancient writings of our Sages confirm this, although in modern times some argue that Yacov wrestled with an angel. They do this to minimize the Messianic nature of this event.

4.

The Burning Bush

Ex 3:1-6

3 Now Moses was pasturing the flock of Jethro his father-in-law, the priest of Midian; and he led the flock to the west side of the wilderness and came to Horeb, the mountain of God. 2 **The angel of the Lord** appeared to him in a blazing fire from the midst of a bush; and he looked, and behold, the bush was burning with fire, yet the bush was not consumed. 3 So Moses said, "I must turn aside now and see this marvelous sight, why the bush is not burned up." 4 When **the Lord** saw that he turned aside to look, **God called to him** from the midst of the bush and said, "Moses, Moses!" And he said, "Here I am." 5 Then He said, "Do not come near here; remove your sandals from your feet, for **the place on which you are standing is holy ground.**" 6 He said also, "**I am the God of your father, the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob.**" Then Moses hid his face, for **he was afraid to look at God.**

Moses also knew that to look at the face of G-d means death. But he has already looked at the fire in the bush. So, if it meant death in this instance, he would already be dead.

The passage identifies this being, manifesting as fire in a bush, as the Angel of the L-rd. But it cannot be an actual “angel.” A holy angel will not speak with the words of G-d using the authority of G-d. A holy angel will not allow worship of himself. A holy angel does not make the place where he rests holy. But Messiah does all these things. The Hebrew word translated “Angel of the L-rd” is *malak*

It has the same letters as the Hebrew word *Melech*, which means “king.” But it has an *aleph* inserted in the middle of those letters. Recall that aleph means “primary, first, head.” So, the meaning of that Hebrew word includes “Primary King.” Or, “king of kings.” Everywhere you see in Scripture “Angel of the L-rd” you can generally conclude Messiah is appearing. Certainly every time that a man bows before the “Angel of the L-rd” it must be Messiah.

Messiah was the one in the bush who commissioned Moses to go get the people out of slavery.

5.

The Rock

Ex 17:1-7

17 Then all the congregation of the sons of Israel journeyed by stages from the wilderness of Sin, according to the command of the Lord, and camped at Rephidim, and there was no water for the people to drink. 2 Therefore the people quarreled with Moses and said, "Give us water that we may drink." And Moses said to them, "Why do you quarrel with me? Why do you test the Lord?" 3 But the people thirsted there for water; and they grumbled against Moses and said, "Why, now, have you brought us up from Egypt, to kill us and our children and our livestock with thirst?" 4 So Moses cried out to the Lord, saying, "What shall I do to this people? A little more and they will stone me." 5 Then the Lord said to Moses, "Pass before the people and take with you some of the elders of Israel; and take in your hand your staff with which you struck the Nile, and go. 6 **Behold, I will stand before you there on the rock at Horeb; and you shall strike the**

rock, and water will come out of it, that the people may drink."

And Moses did so in the sight of the elders of Israel. 7 And he named the place Massah and Meribah because of the quarrel of the sons of Israel, and because they tested the Lord, saying, "Is the Lord among us, or not?"

Rabbi Bahya ben Asher (1255-1340) wrote in his commentary regarding the miraculous event in this passage, that this Rock moved with Israel as it produced water.

The next appearance of this Rock is on the border of Edom, some 40 years later, where it stopped producing water and the people began to complain again.

Num 20:1-13

20 Then the sons of Israel, the whole congregation, came to the wilderness of Zin in the first month; and the people stayed at Kadesh. Now Miriam died there and was buried there.

2 And there was no water for the congregation; and they assembled themselves against Moses and Aaron. 3 The people thus contended with Moses and spoke, saying, "If only we had perished when our brothers perished before the Lord! 4 "Why then have you brought the Lord's assembly into this wilderness, for us and our beasts to die here? 5 "And why have you made us come up from Egypt, to bring us in to this wretched place? It is not a place of grain or figs or vines or pomegranats, nor is there water to drink." 6 Then Moses and Aaron came in from the presence of the assembly to the doorway of the tent of meeting, and fell on their faces. Then the glory of the Lord appeared to them; 7 and the Lord spoke to Moses, saying, 8 **"Take the rod; and you and your brother Aaron assemble the congregation and speak to the rock before their eyes, that it may yield its water. You shall thus bring forth water for them out of the rock and let the congregation and their beasts drink."** 9 So Moses took the rod from before the Lord, just as He had commanded him; 10 and **Moses and Aaron gathered the assembly before the rock.** And he said to them, "Listen now, you rebels; shall we bring forth water for you out of this rock?" 11 **Then Moses lifted up his hand and struck the**

rock twice with his rod; and water came forth abundantly, and the congregation and their beasts drank. 12 But the Lord said to Moses and Aaron, **“Because you have not believed Me, to treat Me as holy in the sight of the sons of Israel, therefore you shall not bring this assembly into the land which I have given them.”** 13 Those were the waters of Meribah, because the sons of Israel contended with the Lord, and He proved Himself holy among them.

Chizkuni, in his commentary on this passage says:

ודברתם אל הסלע, “and speak to the rock (pl.).” The prefix ה before the word: הסלע teaches that the rock involved was the one that used to provide water for the people as long as Miriam had been alive. The people would draw their water from that rock. It used to move with the people whenever they moved. This was the rock that Moses now struck and that refused to yield its water on account of Miriam having died.

Moses well understood that this Rock was special, and it later played a larger part in his life.

Ex 33:12-23

12 Then Moses said to the Lord, “See, You say to me, ‘Bring up this people!’ But You Yourself have not let me know whom You will send with me. Moreover, You have said, ‘I have known you by name, and you have also found favor in My sight.’ 13 “Now therefore, I pray You, if I have found favor in Your sight, let me know Your ways that I may know You, so that I may find favor in Your sight. Consider too” this nation is Your people.” 14 And He said, “My presence shall go with you, and I will give you rest.” 15 Then he said to Him, “If Your presence does not go with us, do not lead us up from here. 16 “For how then can it be known that I have found favor in Your sight, I and Your people? Is it not by Your going with us, so that we, I and Your people, may be distinguished from all the other people who are upon the face of the earth?”

17 The Lord said to Moses, “I will also do this thing of which you have spoken; for you have found favor in My sight and I have known you by name.” 18 **Then Moses said, “I pray You, show me Your**

glory!” 19 And He said, “I Myself will make all My goodness pass before you, and will proclaim the name of the Lord before you; and I will be gracious to whom I will be gracious, and will show compassion on whom I will show compassion.” 20 But He said, “You cannot see My face, for no man can see Me and live!” 21 Then the Lord said, “Behold, there is a place by Me, and you shall stand there on the rock; 22 and it will come about, while My glory is passing by, that I will put you in the cleft of the rock and cover you with My hand until I have passed by. 23 “Then I will take My hand away and you shall see My back, but My face shall not be seen.”

The most obvious characteristic of this Rock is this: this Rock (together with the “Hand of G-d”) is capable of shielding Moses from G-d’s glory. We already know from the passage that none can behold G-d’s glory and live. Our people believe that this passage stands for the proposition that when G-d arrives, His judgment (glory) goes before Him, and destroys all sin and evil, so that when He arrives that place is holy. What follows after Him, in His cleansing wake, is His goodness (mercy).

Deut 32:1-4

32 "Give ear, O heavens, and let me speak;
And let the earth hear the words of my mouth.
2 "Let my teaching drop as the rain,
My speech distill as the dew,
As the droplets on the fresh grass
And as the showers on the herb.
3 "For I proclaim the name of the Lord;
Ascribe greatness to our God!
4 **"The Rock! His work is perfect,
For all His ways are just;
A God of faithfulness and without injustice,
Righteous and upright is He.**

And

13 "He made him ride on the high places of the earth,

And he ate the produce of the field;
And He made him suck honey from **the rock**,
And oil from the flinty rock,

And

15 "But Jeshurun grew fat and kicked-
You are grown fat, thick, and sleek-
Then he forsook God who made him,
And scorned the Rock of his salvation.

16 "They made Him jealous with strange gods;
With abominations they provoked Him to anger.

17 "They sacrificed to demons who were not God,
To gods whom they have not known,
New gods who came lately,
Whom your fathers did not dread.

18 "**You neglected the Rock who begot you,
And forgot the God who gave you birth.**

And

28 "For they are a nation lacking in counsel,
And there is no understanding in them.

29 "Would that they were wise, that they understood this,
That they would discern their future!

30 "How could one chase a thousand,
And two put ten thousand to flight,
Unless their Rock had sold them,
And the Lord had given them up?

31 "**Indeed their rock is not like our Rock,**
Even our enemies themselves judge this.

Paul refers to this very Rock as Messiah as well, and also repeats the well-understood theological aspect of the Rock, as the one that moved with Israel.

1 Cor 10:1-5

10 For I do not want you to be unaware, brethren, that our fathers were all under the cloud , and all passed through the sea; 2 and all were baptized into Moses in the cloud and in the sea; 3 and all ate the same spiritual food ; **4 and all drank the same spiritual drink , for they were drinking from a spiritual rock which followed them; and the rock was Christ.**

6.

A Prophet Like Moses

Deut 18:15-20

15 "The Lord your God will raise up for you a prophet like me from among you, from your countrymen, you shall listen to him. 16 "This is according to all that you asked of the Lord your God in Horeb on the day of the assembly, saying, 'Let me not hear again the voice of the Lord my God, let me not see this great fire anymore, or I will die.' 17 "The Lord said to me, 'They have spoken well. 18 'I will raise up a prophet from among their countrymen like you, and I will put My words in his mouth, and he shall speak to them all that I command him. 19 'It shall come about that whoever will not listen to My words which he shall speak in My name, I Myself will require it of him.

The Thirteenth Century Rabbinic commentator Ralbag (Rabbi Levi ben Gershon) writes concerning this passage:

A prophet from the midst of you.- In fact **the Messiah is such a Prophet** as it is stated in the Midrash [Tanhuma] on the verse "Behold my Servant shall prosper" [Is. 52:13]... **Moses by the miracles which he wrought brought a single nation to worship Elohim, but the Messiah will draw all peoples to the worship of Elohim.** (Ralbag on Duet. 18:18)

Maimonides, in a letter to a Yemenite community, denounces a man claiming to be the Messiah saying:

The Messiah will be a very great Prophet, greater than all the

Prophets with the exception of Moses our teacher...His status will be higher than that of the Prophets and more honorable, Moses alone excepted. The Creator, blessed be He, will single him out with features wherewith He had not singled out Moses; for it is said with references to him, "And his delight shall be in the fear of the Lord; and he shall not judge after the sight of his eyes, neither decide after the hearing of his ears." (Isaiah 11:3)

7.

With Joshua at Jericho

Josh 5:13-15

13 Now it came about when Joshua was by Jericho, that he lifted up his eyes and looked, and behold, **a man was standing opposite him with his sword drawn in his hand**, and Joshua went to him and said to him, "Are you for us or for our adversaries?" 14 He said, "No; rather **I indeed come now as captain of the host of the Lord.**" And **Joshua fell on his face to the earth, and bowed down, and said to him, "What has my lord to say to his servant?"** 15 **The captain of the Lord's host said to Joshua, "Remove your sandals from your feet, for the place where you are standing is holy."** And Joshua did so.

Clearly, Joshua saw one worthy of worship, and bowed down before Him. But it could not be the Almighty, for he lived. He identified Himself as "captain of the hosts of the L-rd." Another way of saying this is the "Lord of hosts." This being is identified as being G-d many places in Scripture, but one of those examples will show us that it is G-d.

Isa 6:1-3

6 In the year of King Uzziah's death **I saw the Lord sitting on a throne**, lofty and exalted, with the train of His robe filling the temple.
2 Seraphim stood above Him, each having six wings: with two he

covered his face, and with two he covered his feet, and with two he flew. 3 And one called out to another and said,

"Holy, Holy, Holy, is the **Lord of hosts**,
The whole earth is full of His glory."

4 And the foundations of the thresholds trembled at the voice of him who called out, while the temple was filling with smoke. 5 Then I said,

"Woe is me, for I am ruined!
Because I am a man of unclean lips,
And I live among a people of unclean lips;
For my eyes have seen the King, the Lord of hosts."

Who is the One that can be seen, worshipped, and who sits on His throne?
Messiah.

8.

Messiah ben Yoseph and Messiah ben David

The Tanach gives us what seems to be two different pictures of Messiah. A "two Messiah" theory was developed to resolve these two seemingly contradictory presentations. We attributed the passages to the suffering servant to Messiah who followed the pattern of Joseph, also called Moshiach ben Yoseph (sometimes called Ephraim). The passages showing Messiah to be a conquering and ruling King, they attributed to Messiah in the pattern of David, who would sit on David's throne. He was also called Moshiach ben David.

A good example of the Ephraim Messiah in Rabbinic literature is a Midrash in which the Messiah is being warned by G-d of what awaits Him if He undertakes this ministry,

Their sins will be upon you like a yoke of iron. They will choke your spirit. Because of their sins, Your tongue will cleave to the roof of your mouth.

Do you accept this? If not, I will remove the decree from you. The Messiah replies:

"Master of the worlds, how long will this last? God replies: "Ephraim, my true Messiah, ever since the six days of creation you have taken this ordeal upon yourself. At this moment, your pain is my pain"

Messiah replies: "Master of the worlds, I accept this with gladness in my soul, and joy in my heart, so that not a single one of the House of Israel should perish. Not only for those alive, but also the dead. It is enough that the servant be like the Master. (Pesikta Rabbati 36)

Gen 49:8-10

8 "Judah, your brothers shall praise you;
Your hand shall be on the neck of your enemies;
Your father's sons shall bow down to you.

9 "Judah is a lion's whelp;
From the prey, my son, you have gone up.
He couches, he lies down as a lion,
And as a lion, who dares rouse him up?

**10 "The scepter shall not depart from Judah,
Nor the ruler's staff from between his feet,
Until Shiloh comes, and to him shall be the obedience of the
peoples.**

The Targums (Onkelos, Pseudo-Jonathan and Yerushalmi) all have "until Messiah comes" in place of "until Shiloh comes".

The Zohar, some of the more mystical writings of the Jews, says that ... "the scepter" referring to the Messiah of the House of Judah, and "the staff" to the Messiah of the House of Joseph.

The suffering Servant Messiah must come first, to be cut-off from His people, and pierced for our sins. Then the Conquering King Messiah, whose kingdom shall have no end, comes at a later time.

9.

Isaiah 53

Isa 53

53 Who has believed our message? And **to whom has the arm of the Lord been revealed?** 2 For He grew up before Him like a tender shoot, And like a root out of parched ground; He has no stately form or majesty That we should look upon Him, Nor appearance that we should be attracted to Him. 3 He was despised and forsaken of men, A man of sorrows and acquainted with grief; And like one from whom men hide their face He was despised, and we did not esteem Him. 4 Surely our griefs He Himself bore, And our sorrows He carried; Yet we ourselves esteemed Him stricken, Smitten of God, and afflicted. 5 But He was pierced through for our transgressions, He was crushed for our iniquities; The chastening for our well-being fell upon Him, And by His scourging we are healed. 6 All of us like sheep have gone astray, Each of us has turned to his own way; But the Lord has caused the iniquity of us all To fall on Him. 7 He was oppressed and He was afflicted, Yet He did not open His mouth; Like a lamb that is led to slaughter, And like a sheep that is silent before its shearers, So He did not open His mouth. 8 By oppression and judgment He was taken away; And as for His generation, who considered That He was cut off out of the land of the living For the transgression of my people, to whom the stroke was due? 9 His grave was assigned with wicked men, Yet He was with a rich man in His death, Because He had done no violence, Nor was there any deceit in His mouth. 10 But the Lord was pleased To crush Him, putting Him to grief; If He would render Himself as a guilt offering, He will see His offspring, He will prolong His days, And the good pleasure of the Lord will prosper in His hand. 11 As a result of the anguish of His soul, He will see it and be satisfied; By His knowledge the Righteous One, My Servant, will justify the many, As He will bear their iniquities. 12 Therefore, I will allot Him a portion with the great, And He will divide the booty with the strong; Because He poured out Himself to

death, And was numbered with the transgressors; Yet He Himself bore the sin of many, And interceded for the transgressors.

The most common and longstanding understanding of this passage was that it spoke clearly of the Messiah ben Yoseph.

Perhaps most interesting is the application of Isaiah 53 to the Messiah in the Zohar:

In the Garden of Eden there is a hall that is called the "hall of the afflicted." Now it is into this hall that the Messiah goes and summons all the afflictions and pains and sufferings of Israel to come upon him. And so they all come upon him. And had he not eased the children of Israel of their sorrow, and taken their burden upon himself, there would be none who could endure the suffering of Israel in penalty of neglecting the Torah. Thus it is written: "Surely our diseases he did bear and our pains he carried." (Is. 53:5) As long as the children of Israel dwelt in the Holy Land, they averted all afflictions and sufferings from the world by the service of the sanctuary and by sacrifice. But now it is the Messiah who is averting them from the habitants of the world. (Zohar 2:212a)

In modern Jewish theology, a reaction against Christianity, the interpretation of Isa 53 has been declared to be "not Messiah, but Israel at large,"

This cannot make sense, if we read just a bit further in Isaiah, as he continues to speak regarding the salvation of Messiah.

Isa 59:9-20

9 Therefore justice is far from us, And righteousness does not overtake us; We hope for light, but behold, darkness, For brightness, but we walk in gloom. 10 We grope along the wall like blind men, We grope like those who have no eyes; We stumble at midday as in the twilight, Among those who are vigorous we are like dead men. 11 All of us growl like bears, And moan sadly like doves; We hope for

justice, but there is none, For salvation, but it is far from us. 12 For our transgressions are multiplied before You, And our sins testify against us; For our transgressions are with us, And we know our iniquities: 13 Transgressing and denying the Lord, And turning away from our God, Speaking oppression and revolt, Conceiving in and uttering from the heart lying words. 14 Justice is turned back, And righteousness stands far away; For truth has stumbled in the street, And uprightness cannot enter. 15 Yes, truth is lacking; And he who turns aside from evil makes himself a prey. **Now the Lord saw, And it was displeasing in His sight that there was no justice. 16 And He saw that there was no man, And was astonished that there was no one to intercede; Then His own arm brought salvation to Him, And His righteousness upheld Him.** 17 He put on righteousness like a breastplate, And a helmet of salvation on His head; And He put on garments of vengeance for clothing And wrapped Himself with zeal as a mantle. 18 According to their deeds, so He will repay, Wrath to His adversaries, recompense to His enemies; To the coastlands He will make recompense. 19 So they will fear the name of the Lord from the west And His glory from the rising of the sun, For He will come like a rushing stream Which the wind of the Lord drives. 20 "A Redeemer will come to Zion, And to those who turn from transgression in Jacob," declares the Lord.

10.

When Messiah Would First Come to Israel

The prophet Daniel was writing what he saw in his vision, but then he was told to seal it up.

Dan 12:1-4

12 "Now at that time Michael, the great prince who stands guard over the sons of your people, will arise. And there will be a time of distress such as never occurred since there was a nation until that time; and at

that time your people, everyone who is found written in the book, will be rescued. 2 "Many of those who sleep in the dust of the ground will awake, these to everlasting life, but the others to disgrace and everlasting contempt. 3 "Those who have insight will shine brightly like the brightness of the expanse of heaven, and those who lead the many to righteousness, like the stars forever and ever. 4 "But as for you, Daniel, conceal these words and seal up the book until the end of time; many will go back and forth, and knowledge will increase."

So what information is sealed in Daniel? A clue can be found in the Talmud:

The Targum of the Prophets was composed by Jonathon ben Uzziel under the guidance of Haggai, Zechariah and Malachi... and a Bat Kol (voice from heaven) came forth and exclaimed, "Who is this that has revealed My secrets to mankind?"... He further sought to reveal by a Targum the inner meaning of the Ketuvim, but a bat kol went forth and said, "Enough!". What was the reason?-- Because the date of the Messiah is foretold in it. (b.Megillah 3a)

The only prophetic book of the Ketuvim (the Writings) is Daniel and this is also a book of the Ketuvim for which no Targum was ever made.

The Qumran community who wrote the Dead Sea Scrolls believed they had found the time of the coming of the Messiah, in the Book of Daniel:

The visitation is the Day of Salvation that He has decreed through Isaiah the prophet concerning all the captives, inasmuch as Scripture says, "How beautiful upon the mountains are the feet of the messenger who announces peace, who brings good news, who announces salvation, who says to Zion "Your ELOHIM reigns"." (Isa. 52;7)
This scriptures interpretation : "the mountains" are the prophets, they who were sent to proclaim God`s truth and to prophesy to all Israel.
"The messengers" is the Anointed of the spirit, of whom Daniel spoke;
"After the sixty-two weeks, a Messiah shall be cut off" (Dan. 9;26)
(From 11Q13)

Our starting point is "the going forth of the commandment to restore and to build Jerusalem" which is Ezra 7:11-16.

Messiah is cut off after the 62 "weeks" which follow the seven weeks. This elaboration allows us to see that the division of these two blocks (the seven weeks and the 62 weeks) was to show that after the seven weeks "the street shall be built again, and the wall" but the Messiah would not come until after the 62 week block following that.

Now if our start point is 457 BCE and 69 "weeks" must fall between this point and the death of Messiah, then Messiah would have to be executed sometime in a window from 26 C.E. to 40 C.E.

11. How Messiah Would Present Himself

Zech 9:9

9 Rejoice greatly, O daughter of Zion! Shout in triumph, O daughter of Jerusalem! Behold, **your king is coming to you**; He is just and endowed with salvation, **Humble, and mounted on a donkey, Even on a colt, the foal of a donkey.**

Dan 7:13-14

13 "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. 14 "**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.

These two presentations of Messiah had an interpretation. The ancients said if Israel were unworthy at His coming, Messiah would come lowly, riding on the foal of an ass. But if Israel were worthy, He would come in the clouds as King.

What is lacking today that would make Israel worthy? The national repentance of our national choice to reject Yeshua as Messiah. And how will our national repentance be evidenced? Just as it was, in part, at the time Yeshua rode into Jerusalem four days before Passover.

Matt 21:6-9

6 The disciples went and did just as Jesus had instructed them, 7 and brought the donkey and the colt, and laid their coats on them; and He sat on the coats. 8 Most of the crowd spread their coats in the road, and others were cutting branches from the trees and spreading them in the road. 9 The crowds going ahead of Him, and those who followed, were shouting,

"Hosanna to the Son of David;
BLESSED IS HE WHO COMES IN THE NAME OF THE LORD;
Hosanna in the highest!"

The shouts of “hosanna” are merely transliterated, not translated. The people were shouting *hoshia-na* (save us now!)

They are quoting from Ps 118, which speaks very clearly of Messiah.

Ps 118:19-29

19 Open to me the gates of righteousness; I shall enter through them, I shall give thanks to the Lord. 20 This is the gate of the Lord; The righteous will enter through it. 21 **I shall give thanks to You, for You have answered me, And You have become my salvation [Yeshua].** 22 **The stone which the builders rejected Has become the chief corner stone.** 23 This is the Lord's doing; It is marvelous in our eyes. 24 This is the day which the Lord has made; Let us rejoice and be glad in it. 25 **O Lord, do save, we beseech You; O Lord, we beseech**

You, do send prosperity! 26 Blessed is the one who comes in the name of the Lord; We have blessed you from the house of the Lord. 27 The Lord is God, and He has given us light; Bind the festival sacrifice with cords to the horns of the altar. **28 You are my God, and I give thanks to You; You are my God, I extol You. 29** Give thanks to the Lord, for He is good; For His lovingkindness is everlasting.

Matt 23:37-39

37 "Jerusalem, Jerusalem, who kills the prophets and stones those who are sent to her! How often I wanted to gather your children together, the way a hen gathers her chicks under her wings, and you were unwilling. 38 "Behold, your house is being left to you desolate! 39 "For I say to you, from now on you will not see Me until you say, 'BLESSED IS HE WHO COMES IN THE NAME OF THE LORD!'"

12. Messiah's Death

We have seen that there must be either two separate Messiahs for Israel (ben Yoseph and ben Dovid) or that there is but one, and He will come to us twice. He will come first as the suffering servant, who saves the world. Then He will come as the conquering king to destroy all the wicked, and rule on David's throne from Jerusalem.

I believe Jewish theology is consistent with the latter interpretation, since we have seen the writing recording a supposed conversation between the Almighty and King Messiah about His taking-on the sins of the people. And we have seen the conclusion of the Targum Jonathan which declares that the Almighty was the architect of creation, and King Messiah the builder. In each of these, there is but one King Messiah. Nowhere in Scripture does it suggest that there must be two separate Messianic figures. But it is clear as well, from the statements by Yeshua, that He will return. I believe all these to be consistent.

So, if one is to be a ruler forever, and whose reign will have no end, but will continually increase, the other one must be the one Who dies. And the one who dies must be the first one. So, let's examine the Scriptures and the writings of our people regarding the death of the former.

Zech 12:10-14

10 "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 firstborn.** 11 "In that day there will be great mourning in Jerusalem, like the mourning of Hadadrimmon in the plain of Megiddo. 12 "The land will mourn, every family by itself; the family of the house of David by itself and their wives by themselves; the family of the house of Nathan by itself and their wives by themselves; 13 the family of the house of Levi by itself and their wives by themselves; the family of the Shimeites by itself and their wives by themselves; 14 all the families that remain, every family by itself and their wives by themselves.

Rabbi Dosa (who lived around 250 CE) concluded:

What is the cause of the mourning [of Zech. 12:12]--...It is well according to him who explains that **the cause is the slaying of Messiah the son of Joseph**, since that well agrees with the Scriptural verse: And they shall look upon me whom they have pierced, And they shall mourn for him as one mourns for his only son. (Zech. 12:10) (b.Sukkot 52a)

Then there is more information regarding the slaying of this Messiah, found in the same prophecy.

Zech 13:1-6

13 "In that day a fountain will be opened for the house of David and for the inhabitants of Jerusalem, for sin and for impurity.

2 "It will come about in that day," declares the Lord of hosts, "that I will cut off the names of the idols from the land, and they will no longer be remembered; and I will also remove the prophets and the unclean spirit from the land. 3 "And if anyone still prophesies, then his father and mother who gave birth to him will say to him, 'You shall not live, for you have spoken falsely in the name of the Lord'; and his father and mother who gave birth to him will pierce him through when he prophesies. 4 "Also it will come about in that day that the prophets will each be ashamed of his vision when he prophesies, and they will not put on a hairy robe in order to deceive; **5 but he will say, 'I am not a prophet; I am a tiller of the ground, for a man sold me as a slave in my youth.'** 6 "And one will say to him, 'What are these wounds between your arms?' Then he will say, 'Those with which **I was wounded in the house of my friends.'**

This passage has some unfortunate translational choices which makes the prophecy unclear as to who is receiving the wounds, and where they are found. The Hebrew makes it far more clear. The false prophets are being confronted and killed for their falsehoods, consistent with the command in Torah found at Deut 13:5. Then the prophecy records a conversation between the Messiah who has provided the “fountain of cleansing” for sin to Israel and one who is trying to conceal himself by claiming he is not a prophet at all. A better translation would be:

4 "Also it will come about in that day that the prophets will each be ashamed of his vision when he prophesies, and they will not put on a hairy robe in order to deceive; 5 but the false prophet [when confronted with Messiah] will say, 'I am not a prophet; I am a tiller of the ground, for a man sold me as a slave in my youth.' 6 "And the false prophet will ask the Messiah before him, 'What are these wounds in your hands?' Then he [Messiah] will respond, 'Those with which I was wounded in the house of my friends.'

Ps 22:1-18

22 My God, my God, why have You forsaken me?
Far from my **deliverance** are the words of my groaning.

2 O my God, I cry by day, but You do not answer;
And by night, but I have no rest.
3 Yet You are holy,
O You who are enthroned upon the praises of Israel.
4 In You our fathers trusted;
They trusted and You delivered them.
5 To You they cried out and were delivered;
In You they trusted and were not disappointed.
6 But I am a worm and not a man,
A reproach of men and despised by the people.
7 All who see me sneer at me;
They separate with the lip, they wag the head, saying,
8 "Commit yourself to the Lord; let Him deliver him;
Let Him rescue him, because He delights in him."
9 Yet You are He who brought me forth from the womb;
You made me trust when upon my mother's breasts.
10 Upon You I was cast from birth;
You have been my God from my mother's womb.
11 Be not far from me, for trouble is near;
For there is none to help. 1
2 Many bulls have surrounded me;
Strong bulls of Bashan have encircled me.
13 They open wide their mouth at me,
As a ravening and a roaring lion.
14 I am poured out like water,
And all my bones are out of joint;
My heart is like wax;
It is melted within me.
15 My strength is dried up like a potsherd,
And my tongue cleaves to my jaws;
And You lay me in the dust of death.
**16 For dogs have surrounded me;
A band of evildoers has encompassed me;
They pierced my hands and my feet.**
17 I can count all my bones.
They look, they stare at me;
18 They divide my garments among them,

And for my clothing they cast lots.

The writings of our people, in Midrash Pesikta Rabbati, applies verses from Psalm 22 to the Messiah ben Yosef, the Suffering Messiah also known as "Ephraim".

During the seven-year period preceding the coming of the son of David, iron beams will be brought low and loaded upon his neck until the Messiah's body is bent low. Then he will cry and weep, and his voice will rise to the very height of heaven, and he will say to God: Master of the universe, how much can my strength endure? How much can my spirit endure? How much my breath before it ceases? How much can my limbs suffer? Am I not flesh and blood? It was because of the ordeal of the son of David that David wept, saying My strength is dried up like a potsherd (Ps. 22:16). During the ordeal of the son of David, the Holy One, blessed be He, will say to him: Ephraim, My true Messiah, long ago, ever since the six days of creation, thou didst take this ordeal upon thyself. At this moment, thy pain is like my pain . . . At these words, the Messiah will reply: Now I am reconciled. The servant is content to be like his Master. (Pesikta Rabbati, Piska 36.2, translated by William G. Braude, Yale University Press, pg. 680-681)

It is taught, moreover, that in the month of Nisan the Patriarchs will arise and say to the Messiah: Ephraim, our true Messiah, even though we are thy forbears, thou art greater than we because thou didst suffer for the iniquities of our children, and terrible ordeals befell thee . . . for the sake of Israel thou didst become a laughingstock and a derision among the nations of the earth; and didst sit in darkness, in thick darkness, and thine eyes saw no light, and thy skin cleaved to thy bones, and thy body was as dry as a piece of wood; and thine eyes grew dim from fasting, and thy strength was dried up like a potsherd - all these afflictions on account of the iniquities of our children . . . (Pesikta Rabbati 37.1, translated by William G. Braude, Yale University Press, pg. 685-686)

Ephraim is a darling son to Me . . . My heart yearneth for him, in mercy I will have mercy upon him, saith the Lord (Jer. 31:20). Why does the verse speak twice of mercy: In mercy I will have mercy upon him? One mercy refers to the time when he will be shut up in prison, a time when the nations of the world will gnash their teeth at him every day, wink their eyes at one another in derision of him, nod their heads at him in contempt, open wide their lips to guffaw, as is said All they that see me laugh me to scorn; they shoot out the lip, they shake the head (Ps. 22:8); My strength is dried up like a potsherd; and my tongue cleaveth to my throat; and thou layest me in the dust of death (Ps. 22:16). Moreover, they will roar over him like lions, as is said They open wide their mouth against me, as a ravening and roaring lion. I am poured out like water, and all my bones are out of joint; my heart is become like wax; it is melted in mine inmost parts (Ps. 22:14-15). (Pesikta Rabbati 37.1, translated by William G. Braude, Yale University Press, pg. 686-687)

The zeal of some within Israel to be certain that our people did not see these verses as applying to Yeshua so clearly, and knowing that many of our people will not read the ancient writings cited above, have engaged in an intentional mistranslation of an important verse in this passage. It is:

16 For dogs have surrounded me;
A band of evildoers has encompassed me;
They pierced my hands and my feet.

This has been translated as follows in the Masoretic text:

16 For dogs have surrounded me;
A band of evildoers has encompassed me;
Like a lion my hands and my feet.

In the Hebrew the difference between these two readings is only one letter. The final letter in the word is either a yud, or a vav. They look very similar, and might be mistaken one for the other.

KARU (קָרְאוּ) "They have pierced"
(KAR means "pierced" and the -U means "they")

KARI (כָּרִי) "Like a lion"
(K- means "like" and ARI means "lion")

Clearly one of these is right, and the other an error. Not all of the Masoretic texts of the Tanach show it as *kari*. Many show it as *karu*. The oldest manuscripts of this passage we have are found in the Dead Sea Scrolls. The Dead Sea Scrolls of Psalm 22 reads in the manuscript designated 5/6HevPs:

“They have pierced my hands and feet.”

Older yet is the Greek manuscript of the Tanach created by 72 Rabbis for the royal library in Egypt. It is called the “Septuagint” and is a faithful rendering of the Scriptures. In Psalm 22, it also reads:

“They have pierced my hands and feet.”

The commonly accepted Masoretic text using “as a lion” is clearly a dramatic departure from proper Hebrew grammar as well, since the sentence rendered this way lacks a verb. While “they have pierced my hands and feet” makes sense, the rendering “like a lion are my hands and feet” is nonsensical. This passage describes a person who is in greatest distress, and is dying. Nobody who is in this condition has either hands nor feet that are anything like a “lion.”

The notion of this person, afflicted to the point of death, having his hands and feet pierced, would be consistent with his agony.

Add to this notion that the Masoretes were vehemently anti-Yeshua as Messiah. They engaged in a large number of translational choices in their re-writing of the Tanach which either minimized, or obscured completely, the meanings of passages which stood as strong proofs that Yeshua was Messiah.

It is important to know that only the Masoretic Text (which originated in the 9th Century CE) has "like a lion" and even then some copies have "they have pierced".

All other older versions including the Greek Septuagint, the Dead Sea Scrolls, and the Aramaic Peshitta Tanak read "they have pierced".

The Masoretes have successfully changed G-d's word for a time. But they cannot erase all the previous renderings of this important verse, or the fact that the Jewish people had as part of their theology a clear understanding that Messiah would have His hands and feet pierced by His enemies (even among His own people).

Isa 53:10-12

10 But the Lord was pleased
To crush Him, putting Him to grief;
If He would render Himself as a guilt offering,
He will see His offspring,
He will prolong His days,
And the good pleasure of the Lord will prosper in His hand.
11 As a result of the anguish of His soul,
He will see it and be satisfied;
By His knowledge the Righteous One,
My Servant, will justify the many,
As He will bear their iniquities.
12 Therefore, I will allot Him a portion with the great,
And He will divide the booty with the strong;
Because He poured out Himself to death,
And was numbered with the transgressors;
Yet He Himself bore the sin of many,
And interceded for the transgressors.

Our people have analyzed this passage, and focused on this statement.

If He would render Himself as a guilt offering,
He will see His offspring,

In the Targum of Jonathan, it is recorded our understanding of this statement.

Behold, My Servant the Messiah shall prosper; he shall be exalted and great and very powerful. (Targum Jonathan on Is. 52:13)

It is the will of the Lord to purify and to acquit as innocent the remnant of His people, to cleanse their souls of sin, so that they may see the Kingdom of their Messiah, have many sons and daughters, enjoy long life, and observe the Torah of the Lord, prospering according to his will. (Targum Jonathan on Is. 53:10)

A bit further down in this passage, the Masoretic text once again contains an error. The passage as rendered in their text is:

11 As a result of the anguish of His soul,
He will see shall be satisfied;

The sentence as they rendered it is not only violative of Hebrew grammar, it is nonsensical. So, there must be a missing word in the Hebrew resulting in two verbs in a row "shall see" and "shall be satisfied". What shall be seen, and that resulting in satisfaction by G-d?

In the Septuagint, as well as two copies of the book of Isaiah which were discovered in Qumran among the Dead Sea Scrolls, the missing word appears. It is "light." The passage in those texts reads:

11 As a result of the anguish of His soul,
He will see light and shall be satisfied;

What is this light that shall be seen? Our people have understood that it is the light that existed before the Sun and Moon were created, at the beginning of creation. That light is Messiah. King David declared that G-d is light, and he is also "salvation", literally Yeshua.

Ps 27:1

27 The Lord is my light and my salvation;

Yeshua identified Himself as that light as well.

John 8:12-13

12 Then Jesus again spoke to them, saying, "I am the Light of the world; he who follows Me will not walk in the darkness, but will have the Light of life."

13. Messiah's Resurrection

Amos 9:11

11 "In that day I will raise up the fallen booth of David, And wall up its breaches; I will also raise up its ruins And rebuild it as in the days of old;

Our people have understood that the plain meaning of this passage is that the Temple shall be rebuilt in the days of Messiah's reign. But they have also seen a secondary application in the idea of resurrection.

There is a piece of important theology recorded in tractate Sanhedrin which indicates that one of the conditions for eliminating someone in Israel from being part of the World to Come (Kingdom of Heaven) is:

And these are the ones who have no part in the World to Come: He who says, the resurrection of the dead is a teaching which is not derived from the Torah... (m.San. 10:1)

In the Talmud, there is a discussion which makes it clear that the Amos passage's hidden meaning is that Messiah will be resurrected in bodily form, just as the Temple will be rebuilt in reality.

Rabbi Nahman said to Rabbi Isaac: "Have you heard when Bar Nafle will come?" "Who is Bar Nafle?", he asked. "Messiah," he answered, "Do you call Messiah Bar Nafle?" "Even so," he rejoined, "As it is written: "In that day, I will raise up the tabernacle of David ha-nofelet [that is fallen]. (Amos 9:11)" (b.San 97a)

Nachman so closely associates resurrection with Messiah that he calls Him, “Son of Resurrection.” Also in this segment of Talmud, the term “David” is clearly referred to as the Messiah ben Dovid.

This theology is also reflected in a writing found among the Dead Sea Scrolls in cave 4, which gives the following commentary in Amos 9:11:

“I shall raise up the tabernacle of David that is fallen”
(Amos 9:11). This passage describes the fallen Branch
of David, whom He shall raise up to deliver Israel.
(Q174 III, 12-13)

The "Branch of David" is a clear reference to the figure described in Isaiah 11 which everyone agrees is a Messianic prophecy.

One of the central prayers of the Siddur, which predates the birth of Yeshua as a man, is used today in the synagogues. It follows immediately after the prayer for the rebuilding of Jerusalem, and just before we ask G-d to please hear our prayers. It is *Et Semech David*, the “branch of David.” We have already seen above that the “Branch of David” refers to Moshiach ben Dovid.

אֶת־צֶמַח דָּוִד עֲבֹדְךָ מְהֵרָה תַּצְמִיחַ וְקִרְנּוֹ תָרוּם בִּישׁוּעָתְךָ כִּי
לִישׁוּעָתְךָ קִוִּינוּ כָּל הַיּוֹם: בָּרוּךְ אַתָּה יְהוָה מַצְמִיחַ קֶרֶן יִשׁוּעַ

The translations found in the modern siddurs seem to be created to obscure the plain meaning of this traditional prayer. I will give you below a more literal translation of this passage:

Speedily cause the Branch of David, Your Servant, to flourish, and
exalt His power in Your Yeshua. For we hope all the day long for
your Yeshua. Blessed are You L-rd, who causes the power of Yeshua
to arise.

This particular prayer was clear, after giving His name three times, that Yeshua was Messiah, that we have awaited Him for generations, and that through Yeshua’s own

power He arose from the grave. We have said this prayer at least once per day in our daily prayers for generations.

But those who were powerful in our people after the destruction of the Second Temple didn't wish for this prayer to be said any longer, because they had rejected Yeshua as Messiah, and they didn't wish our people to continue to recognize Him as Messiah by this very obvious prayer. So, those leaders resolved to ban this prayer from our liturgy.

Our people are not so easily manipulated, and because this prayer had been part of our services for generations, we insisted it remain. So, the attempt to purge it failed. But that led to the creation of another prayer, now the 13th in that series, which was created and added to our services to be a sharp dividing line between those who believed in Yeshua as Messiah, and the majority who did not. That new prayer is today titled, "Against Enemies." A translation of that prayer, says:

Let there be no hope for heretics and may all wickedness instantly perish; may all the enemies of Your people be swiftly cut off, and may You quickly uproot, crush, rout and subdue the insolent, speedily in our days. Blessed are You, Adonoy, Crusher of enemies. and Subduer of the insolent.

After the destruction of the Temple, our people still met together, regardless of whether one were a believer in Yeshua or not. After this prayer, specifically directed against the Sadducees, the Essenes, the Herodians, the Messianics, and all other groups of Judaism which were divergent from the Pharisaic norm, those groups would not pray this prayer. They weren't about to pronounce a curse against themselves for their beliefs. And those in the synagogue would notice when certain members would not say this prayer in order. Then those who were of these other groups, now described as "enemies of Israel" were gradually driven away by scorn of the majority. And so it was that the Messianics were driven out of the normative synagogues, as those assemblies turned away from the traditional teachings and theologies of our people for hundreds of years.

14.

Messiah as the Word

Our people have believed, from ancient times, that the Torah was in many ways a living entity, through which G-d created all things. This concept is recorded in Midrash Rabah.

The Torah declares: 'I was the working tool of the Holy One, blessed be He.' In human practice, when a mortal king builds a palace, he builds it not with his own skill but with the skill of an architect. The architect moreover does not build it out of his head, but employs plans and diagrams to know how to arrange the chambers and the wicket doors. Thus Elohim consulted the Torah and created the world, while the Torah declares, IN THE BEGINNING GOD CREATED (I,1), BEGINNING referring to the Torah, as in the verse, God made me as the beginning of His way (Prov. VIII, 22). (Genesis Rabbah 1:5)

Philo, a first-century Jewish writer and philosopher, wrote of the theology of the day regarding the Word, and its relationship to Messiah.

The head of all things is the eternal Word (Logos) of the eternal God, under which, as if it were his feet or other limbs, is placed the whole world, over which He passes and firmly stands. Now it is not because Messiah is Lord that He passes and sits over the whole world, for His seat with His Father and God but because for its perfect fullness the world is in need of the care and superintendence of the best ordered dispensation, and for its own complete piety, of the Divine Word (Logos), just as living creatures (need) a head, without which it is impossible to live. (Q&A on Exodus, II, 117)

Other writings, too numerous to include here, make it clear that the Word of the Lord is Messiah. Occasionally the Aramaic word *Memra* is used for Word, but it is the same meaning.

And Jacob vowed a vow, saying, "If the Word [Memra] of God will be my support, and will keep me in the way that I go, and will give me

bread to eat, and raiment to put on, so that I come again to my father's house in peace; then shall the Word [Memra] of YHWH be my God. (Targum Onkelos on Gen. 28:20-21)

And the Word [Memra] of the Lord created man in his likeness, in the likeness of God, God created, male and female created He them. (Targ. Jonathan Gen. 1:27)

And the Word [Memra] of God said to Moses: "I am He who said unto the world 'Be!' and it was: and who in the future shall say to it 'Be!' and it shall be." And He said: "Thus you shall say to the children of Israel: 'I Am' has sent me to you." (Jerusalem Targum Ex. 3:14)

The first night, when the "Word of the Lord" was revealed to the world in order to create it, the world was desolate and void, and darkness spread over the face of the abyss and the "Word of the Lord" was bright and illuminating and He called it the first night. (Fragmentary Targum Ex. 12:42)

So, we can now see that the introductory statements found in the gospel of John are not an expression of new ideas at all, but a repetition and arrangement of the long-existing theological statements of the Jewish people for many generations. The Word of the L-rd is, and was, and shall ever be... Messiah Yeshua.

John 1:1-5

1 In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. 2 He was in the beginning with God. 3 All things came into being through Him, and apart from Him nothing came into being that has come into being. 4 In Him was life, and the life was the Light of men. 5 The Light shines in the darkness, and the darkness did not comprehend it.

15.

Messiah's Second Coming

We have already discussed the concept that we have one Messiah, but He must come once as the Suffering Servant who saves the world and dies (ben Yoseph), and again as the conquering King who will reign on David's throne (ben Dovid).

Our sages have discussed at some length what the coming of Moshiach ben Dovid will be like. There is extensive writing on this topic in the Talmud in tractate Sanhedrin. I will not reproduce all of it here, in the interests of space, but what I give you below should show that the coming of King Messiah has been central to the theology of Jews for many ages.

R. Johanan said: When you see a generation ever dwindling, hope for him [the Messiah], as it is written, And the afflicted people thou wilt save.²⁷ R. Johanan said: When thou seest a generation overwhelmed by many troubles as by a river, await him, as it is written, when the enemy shall come in like a flood, the Spirit of the Lord shall lift up a standard against him; which is followed by, And the Redeemer shall come to Zion.

R. Johanan also said: The son of David will come only in a generation that is either altogether righteous or altogether wicked. 'in a generation that is altogether righteous,' — as it is written, Thy people also shall be all righteous: they shall inherit the land for ever. 'Or altogether wicked,' — as it is written, And he saw that there was no man, and wondered that there was no intercessor; and it is [elsewhere] written, For mine own sake, even for mine own sake, will I do it.

R. Alexandri said: R. Joshua b. Levi pointed out a contradiction. it is written, in its time [will the Messiah come], whilst it is also written, I [the Lord] will hasten it! — if they are worthy, I will hasten it: if not, [he will come] at the due time. R. Alexandri said: R. Joshua opposed two verses: it is written, And behold, one like the son of man came with the clouds of heaven whilst [elsewhere] it is written, [behold, thy king cometh unto thee ...] lowly, and riding upon an ass! — if they

are meritorious, [he will come] with the clouds of heaven; if not, lowly and riding upon an ass. King Shapur [I] said to Samuel, 'Ye maintain that the Messiah will come upon an ass: I will rather send him a white horse of mine.' He replied, 'Have you a hundred-hued steed?'

R. Joshua b. Levi met Elijah standing by the entrance of R. Simeon b. Yohai's tomb. He asked him: 'Have I a portion in the world to come?' He replied, 'if this Master desires it.' R. Joshua b. Levi said, 'I saw two, but heard the voice of a third.' He then asked him, 'When will the Messiah come?' — 'Go and ask him himself,' was his reply. 'Where is he sitting?' — 'At the entrance.' And by what sign may I recognise him?' — 'He is sitting among the poor lepers: all of them untie [them] all at once, and rebandage them together, whereas he unties and rebandages each separately, [before treating the next], thinking, should I be wanted, [it being time for my appearance as the Messiah] I must not be delayed [through having to bandage a number of sores].' So he went to him and greeted him, saying, 'peace upon thee, Master and Teacher.' 'peace upon thee, O son of Levi,' he replied. 'When wilt thou come Master?' asked he, 'To-day', was his answer. On his returning to Elijah, the latter enquired, 'What did he say to thee?' — 'peace Upon thee, O son of Levi,' he answered. Thereupon he [Elijah] observed, 'He thereby assured thee and thy father of [a portion in] the world to come.' 'He spoke falsely to me,' he rejoined, 'stating that he would come to-day, but has not.' He [Elijah] answered him, 'This is what he said to thee, To-day, if ye will hear his voice.'

16.

What Are The Chances Anyone Other Than Yeshua is Messiah?

So far in this paper, I have been discussing the existing theology of the Jewish people up to, and including, the time that Yeshua walked among us as a man. And although considerable efforts have been made by some Jewish religious leaders to

obscure these truths, some of our historical theology of Messiah keeps popping up and persisting even until this time.

But now I wish to simply engage in one last exercise. There are still some arguments between Jews as to who Yeshua is. Is He Messiah, or not? For those who are committed to be opposed to Yeshua, there will never seem to be sufficient proof, regardless of what our people have believed and known about Messiah from ancient days. But just maybe a statistical analysis might prove valuable to at least move the needle a bit.

There is no solid consensus regarding precisely how many Messianic prophecies the Tanach contains. Some believe there are more than 400. Others are certain of at least 300. If we were to look at each time the *Aleph-Tav* appears and see if it hints of Messiah, and if we were to look at all the occurrences of the Hebrew word Yeshua (translated as “salvation”) to see which of those suggest strongly something about Messiah, I suspect there would be tens of thousands of those as well. But that very large number would render a workable statistical analysis too far out of reach.

So, for purposes of this section, I will simply limit the number of messianic prophecies to 300. As I do, you will know that the true numbers must be many millions if not billions of times larger than those I present.

The question I will present for consideration in this section is this:

“What are the chances that *anyone other than Yeshua* might be the Messiah?”
With that being asked, we can begin our analysis. And fortunately, we can use mathematics and the science of probability to assist us in this endeavor.

The Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT) calculated the odds of anyone other than Yeshua fulfilling *only eight* of the messianic prophecies. The result was 1 in 100 trillion.

1/100,000,000,000,000,000

It is said that these are the same odds as a blind man selecting on his first try one specific silver dollar among those covering an area the size of the State of Texas two feet deep.

When we increase the number of messianic prophecies to be fulfilled to only 48, the chances of anyone other than Yeshua being Messiah comes to 1 in 10^{157} . Writing that particular number would involve many lines of this document, so I will refrain.

A mathematician has said that these odds are equivalent now to by chance identifying one certain single atom among all the atoms which make up all the matter of all the known known galaxies in the universe.

So, we can quickly see that if we were to try to increase the number of messianic prophecies to the lowest number lacking any dispute, being 300, the calculations quickly exceed what we as humans can even describe, or even comprehend.

And it is also important to understand that many of the messianic prophecies were strictly time-limited. The prophecy of Daniel renders a very short window of time for Messiah to be born, live, and then die. The Sages believed that there would be 2000 years of chaos in the Earth. Then there would be (following the giving of the Torah to Israel) 2000 years of Torah. Then the Messiah would come, and the Messianic Age would be for 2,000 years. So, in the year 4,000 since creation, Messiah should have come. According to Jewish calendaring, we are today in year 5784. By that reckoning, Messiah should have come not later than 1,784 years ago. One of our most revered Sages, known as the Gaon of Vilna, has been reputed to say, "If Messiah has not already come, He is not coming."

Further, a number of messianic prophecies are location-limited. He is to be born in a certain identified city in Israel, that of Bet-Lechem, the City of David. And for Him to "fulfill all righteousness" He needed to be in the Temple three times a year following his Bar Mitzvah (as recorded in Luke 2:42). Then He had to die at a certain time in a certain place, in a certain manner.

These new dramatic limitations make it certain that only a very few male children who were born at the right time, in the right city, in the right family, with the right genealogy, had any chance at all of being Messiah. So, the statistical analysis

performed by mathematicians as represented above still brings within the circle of possibility far too many other people. So, although those numbers are very large, they still may be far too small if one factors-in these other limitations.

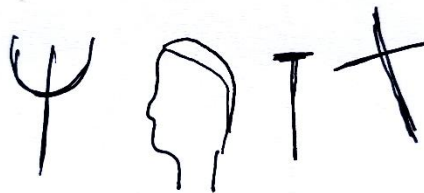
In the end, there is *no chance whatsoever*, with any numbers you can reasonably choose, that Yeshua is not the Messiah, and that someone else might have been.

And the final proof of Yeshua as Messiah has been written on the covers of Jewish Bibles for generations. It is the word “Torah.”

In modern, block Hebrew, it appears like this.



In the more ancient form of the language, before the Babylonian captivity, each letter was more of a pictograph. Each of the letters had a meaning. The same word in the ancient Hebrew looked like this:



The letters are the same, from right to left, *tav, vav, resh, heh*.

Ancient Hebrew letters were formulated by Joseph in Egypt, and by the time the Hebrews left during the Exodus, the people had fully differentiated their language from the Egyptians, and their children could both read and write the Hebrew language.

So, the pre-Babylonian Hebrew, as written above, was the language in which all the Hebrew writings were penned before Babylon. So, Moses, Joshua, and even King David all read this pictographic form of the language.

The reason I wish to show you only the word Torah in the ancient Hebrew is to show you something wonderful. Let's put the meanings of the letters to the letters themselves.

 = "Covenant"

 = "Nail," "attached to," or "and"

 = "Man," "first," or "head"

 = "Revealed"

So, reading these letters from top to bottom, they spell out "Torah." There are some things that you immediately notice when looking at these ancient letter forms.

Let's start with *tav*, at the top. It was formed occasionally as if it were a modern letter "X", but there were times when it was more upright. I have written more upright to make the point. You see it looks like a cross – the depiction of the Roman execution stake upon which criminals were killed. That sign stands for covenant.

The next letter down is the *vav*. It means "nail," but as it is used in the Torah, it means "connected to", or simply "and." It looks like a nail, and that isn't accidental. Even today, if you were to go into a hardware store in Israel and ask for a *vav*, they would show you their selection of nails. This letter, when used in a Hebrew word, serves to join the meanings of the two letters on either side of it

together as one. It signals the reader to combine those meanings to in the mind to achieve the true meaning.

The next letter down is *resh*. It means “man” or “head,” By “head” it can mean the “beginning,” or even “first.” This letter can also be pronounced as *rosh*. When you hear a Jewish person talk about Rosh HaShanah, he is talking about the “head of the year,” or “first of the year.”

The final letter in the series is *heh*. Its form shows you much about its meaning, as well. It looks like a person standing with his arms raised in excitement, amazement, or discovery. That is consistent with it’s meaning, which is “revealed.” It is as if the person is expressing delight in seeing something revealed which had previously been unseen. It is easy to remember, for you can visualize the delighted person crying out “Hey!” in his surprise.

In Hebrew language, we put these meanings together to get the intent of the word. As you can see there are several options. That is the beauty of Hebrew. There are many options and nuances that can be contained in each Hebrew word. Some of the possible meanings you can assemble from these four letters are:

Revelation of the man attached to the covenant.
The covenant of the nail-man revealed.
The head revealer of the nail-covenant.

And you can go on. But the simplest sentence just might be the most revealing:

“The head of the covenant revealed.”

Or even simpler yet...

“Hey look! A man is nailed to a cross!”

Who is the covenant-man who was nailed to the cross? This One is Yeshua the Messiah.

Even the title of the Holy Book bears His name.