

“Worship God,” *tō Theō proskunēson* (τῷ θεῷ προσκύνησον). When however, veneration is issued toward Yeshua the Messiah involving the verb *proskuneō* or “worship,” one does not see any rebuke issued.

REVELATION 22:12-21

“Behold, I am coming quickly, and My reward *is* with Me, to render to every man according to what he has done. I am the Alpha and the Omega, the first and the last, the beginning and the end.’ Blessed are those who wash their robes, so that they may have the right to the tree of life, and may enter by the gates into the city. Outside are the dogs and the sorcerers and the immoral persons and the murderers and the idolaters, and everyone who loves and practices lying. I, Yeshua, have sent My angel to testify to you these things for the [assembly]. I am the root and the descendant of David, the bright morning star.’ The Spirit and the bride say, ‘Come.’ And let the one who hears say, ‘Come.’ And let the one who is thirsty come; let the one who wishes take the water of life without cost. I testify to everyone who hears the words of the prophecy of this book: if anyone adds to them, God will add to him the plagues which are written in this book; and if anyone takes away from the words of the book of this prophecy, God will take away his part from the tree of life and from the holy city, which are written in this book. He who testifies to these things says, ‘Yes, I am coming quickly.’ Amen. Come, Lord Yeshua. The grace of the Lord Yeshua be with all. Amen.”

As the Book of Revelation closes, Yeshua the Messiah delivers the stark admonition, “Behold, I am coming soon, bringing my recompense with me, to repay everyone for what he has done” (Revelation 22:12, ESV). He asserts His supremacy, as rendered in the CJSB with, “I am the א (*Alef*) and the ט (*Tav*), the First and the Last, the Beginning and the End” (Revelation 22:13). More literally from the source text, this is “I [am] the Alpha and the Omega, the first and the last, the beginning and the end” (Brown and Comfort),¹⁰⁶ *egō to alpha kai to ō, ho prōtos kai ho eschatos, hē archē kai to telos* (ἐγὼ τὸ ἄλφα καὶ τὸ ὦ, ὁ πρῶτος καὶ ὁ ἔσχατος, ἡ ἀρχὴ καὶ τὸ τέλος). It cannot go unnoticed that not only has God proper already called Himself by these titles earlier in 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’—but that the titles themselves are rooted in Tanach assertions about the nature of God, and His exclusivity as Creator:

“God said to Moses, ‘I AM WHO I AM’; and He said, ‘Thus you shall say to the sons of Israel, ‘I AM has sent me to you’” (Exodus 3:14).

“Thus says the LORD, the King of Israel and his Redeemer, the LORD of hosts: ‘I am the first and I am the last, and there is no God besides Me’” (Isaiah 44:6).

“Listen to Me, O Jacob, even Israel whom I called; I am He, I am the first, I am also the last” (Isaiah 48:12).

Would it be proper for any supernatural, but ultimately created being or entity, to exclaim, “I am the ‘A’ and the ‘Z,’ the First and the Last, the Beginning and the End” (Revelation 22:13, CJB)? It should hardly come as a surprise, given the Tanach or Old Testament background of these titles, that commentators have concluded that Yeshua the Messiah shares the same nature as the One God of Israel:

¹⁰⁶ Brown and Comfort, 912.

THE NATURE OF YESHUA IN THE REVELATION GIVEN TO JOHN

- Leon Morris: “All three expressions mean much the same and they set Christ apart from all created being. None other than God could share in these titles of God.”¹⁰⁷
- G.R. Beasley-Murray: “The Christ exercises the judgment which belongs to God alone because he shares the nature of God.”¹⁰⁸
- George Eldon Ladd: “Christ can be the judge of men because he transcends all human experience, sharing the eternal nature of God himself.”¹⁰⁹
- Robert H. Mounce: “He is unlimited in any temporal sense, and in that all things are found both in the Father and in the Son the attributes of the former belong to the latter as well.”¹¹⁰
- Ben Witherington III: “[B]oth God and Christ are called Alpha and Omega in this work (in 1.8 and 21.6, it is God; but in 1.17 and probably here at 22.13, it is Christ). This does not make Christ a second God, but rather includes him in the being of the one God of Israel who is Alpha and Omega. The use of the reward language, like the use of Alpha and Omega language, is derived from Isaiah (cf. 40.11; 62.11 on the former; 41.4; 44.6; 48.12 on the latter). It implies that John sees Christ as included within the godhead, for only God is the truly eternal one who will at the last day dispense rewards.”¹¹¹

Yeshua the Messiah declaring that He is “the Alpha and the Omega, the First and the Last, the Beginning and the End” (Revelation 22:13, TLV), is representative of a high Christology. Yet, Yeshua the Messiah is hardly the Alef and the Tav, Alpha and Omega, First, Last, Beginning, End, all independent and on His own. Yeshua the Messiah is only the Beginning and the End in association with His integration into the Divine Identity of the One God of Israel. It is to be legitimately recognized that a significant problem in much of today’s evangelical Christianity, may be labeled as “Jesus-olatry,” where Yeshua is the only figure which is seen being worshipped or venerated—with God the Father a distant afterthought. While Yeshua is God, Yeshua is not the totality of what or who God is.

As we close this lengthy study of Bible passages on the nature of the Messiah, and consider the final state of things (Revelation 22:14-15), how do we approach Yeshua’s invitation to the future Kingdom (Revelation 22:16-17), in light of our examination of His nature? The Book of Revelation closes with a warning to those who would take away from its severe and sober message (Revelation 22:18-19). Those—whether they be various individuals in the broad Messianic movement and/or various independent Hebrew/Hebraic Roots persuasions, or those Christians who might go by a label like “Biblical Unitarian”—who adhere to a low Christology of Yeshua as a created being or entity, have taken something significant away from us. They have not just conducted sub-standard or incomplete exegesis of the Holy Scriptures; they have demeaned and cheapened the centrality and supremacy of the Messiah’s role in salvation history. And this writer is astutely aware, that as we approach the Messiah’s Second Coming (Revelation 22:20-21), that as lengthy and as detailed as this study has been—**more will definitely be produced in the future involving the nature of Yeshua, His Messiahship, and the trustworthiness of the Bible itself.**

¹⁰⁷ Morris, *Revelation*, 252.

¹⁰⁸ Beasley-Murray, *Revelation*, 339.

¹⁰⁹ Ladd, 293.

¹¹⁰ Mounce, *Revelation*, 393.

¹¹¹ Witherington, *Revelation*, 281.