

God's Everlasting Covenant
presents
Shadows of the Messiah: Joseph (Part 2)

In part I of our study about Joseph, we saw the great similarities between the person of Joseph and our Messiah, Yeshua. Just as Joseph, while exiled in Egypt *among the Gentiles* became great and saved the people from destruction by the famine, so Yeshua, while exiled from his brethren, has become great *among the Gentiles* and become the Savior of the world. Just as Joseph was disguised as an Egyptian and not recognized by his brothers, so Yeshua has been disguised in the same way and his Jewish brothers have not recognized him as their Messiah.

From reading the Torah, one can clearly discern that God chose the Jewish people, Israel, to be a light to the nations. Their purpose was to lead the Gentile world to the God of Israel. We could say, in essence, that the Father sent Yeshua's brothers, the Jews, to pasture His flock on the earth. This is exactly what has happened. They have indeed, pastured the flock of the Gentile world and led them to the God of Israel, but they do not yet recognize it. This has been accomplished through their brother, Yeshua, while He has been hidden away in Egypt -- the world -- disguised as a Gentile.

There is another exciting and eye opening lesson that is hidden within the Hebrew text of story of Joseph. In order to "see" it, one has to understand something Yeshua taught us...we have to learn about the "jots and tittles."

"Do not think that I came to abolish the Torah or the Prophets; I did not come to abolish but to fulfill. For truly I say to you, until heaven and earth pass away, not the smallest [jot] or [tittle] shall pass from the Torah until all is accomplished."
(Matthew 5:17-18a)

Yeshua was teaching us something very important that Christians often miss when He said these words. They miss it due to a misunderstanding and improper translation. The first and most important thing He was saying is that the law of Moses, the Torah, has not been done away with. We don't have the time to get into the depth of what Yeshua was saying in this teaching. But we can see that He goes on to say how valid the Torah is for us still today by what He says in the next statement. He says that until heaven and earth pass away, not one "jot" or "tittle" will pass away. The last time I looked, heaven and earth were still here! This means that the Torah still applies to us today. In particular, He is calling our attention to something called "jots" and "tittles." What are these?

Some translations say "the smallest letter or stroke"; some say "even the smallest detail." Many have believed Yeshua was referring to the smallest letter in the Hebrew alphabet, which is the "yud." It is a tiny letter that looks a bit like an apostrophe: ך. They say that the "tittles" are the pointed edges to the letters, which are written a certain special way by the Scribes. These edges are called "horns." Also, there are several letters which have what appear to be crowns above them. They are called "tagin" and look like miniature "zayin". The "zayin" is the

7th letter of the alphabet. Although these things have something to teach us, it is believed by many that this is not what Yeshua meant by “jots” and “tittles.”

So, the question remains: what did He mean? We believe that He was referring to special markings that appear in the Torah. There are dots over certain words, and there are several anomalies, such as enlarged and diminished letters, wide spaces, brick pattern text, suspended and inverted letters. Although no one can be absolutely certain what was meant when Yeshua said these words due to the nearly 2000-year separation of our faith from the Hebraic roots and the lost teachings on the subject, it does seem that in these last days, the Holy Spirit is bringing revelation to many about what these “jots” and “tittles” mean. One such Torah teacher is Monte Judah, who has done an extensive teaching called “The Jots and Tittles of Moses.” While I personally don’t subscribe to everything Monte teaches, I do believe the LORD has given him some wonderful insights with regard to this subject. The location of one particular “jot” may be a further validation of the entire Joseph story as a prophetic shadow of the Messiah and a picture of God’s redemptive purposes for Israel and the entire world, which we have already discovered. It is located in Genesis 37:12-13. Let’s turn there for a moment.

Now, his brothers went to pasture their father’s flock in Shechem. And Israel said to Joseph, “Your brothers are pasturing in Shechem, are they not? Come, I will send you to them.”



In the Hebrew, these two letters, the *aleph-tav*, appear right before the word for “flock” which is *tzon* in Hebrew. The word reads, *et-tzon*. But the *et* (*aleph-tav*) is not translated into English. This combination of letters is a Hebrew preposition which appears over 11,000 times in the *Tanakh*. The meaning and importance of the *aleph-tav* combination can’t be addressed in this short teaching. For our purposes, it is important to understand that these two letters are the first and last letters of the Hebrew alphabet: the *aleph* and *tav*. If one was translating the letters into Greek, they would be “alpha” and “omega.” This strange combination of the *aleph* and *tav* first appear in the Bible in Genesis 1:1. They are the fourth word of the Torah, and this word *et*, the combination of the *aleph-tav* is also not translated. (See illustration below).

7	6	5	4	3	2	1
הָאָרֶץ	וְאֵת	הַשָּׁמַיִם	אֵת	אֱלֹהִים	בְּרָא	בְּרֵאשִׁית
the earth	and	the heavens	?	God	created	in the beginning

The meaning becomes crystal clear when we remember that Yeshua says in the Revelation, “I am the alpha and the omega, the first and the last, the beginning and the end.” (Revelation 22:13)

There was the *aleph-tav*, right in the fourth word of Genesis, and He was there in the beginning with God when He created the heavens and the earth, and everything else. John 1:1 is a midrash on the *aleph-tav* as the Word of God! Now, it is very important for us to remember that Yeshua was a Jew. He appeared to John, or *Yochanan*, who was also a Jew. Both spoke Hebrew. Yeshua would not have spoken in the Greek language to His most beloved disciple. He would have spoken in their native tongue, Hebrew! He would not have said, “I am the *alpha* and *omega*.” This is the translation of what He said into Greek. He would have said, “I am the *aleph* and *tav*!”

So, if the combination of the *aleph-tav* represents Yeshua, then perhaps the two dots above these letters represent the piercing of our Messiah, which is foreshadowed by the suffering of Joseph.

Another interesting parallel between Yosef and Yeshua is that Yosef was sent out of his father’s house by his father, Jacob, to check on his brothers, who were pasturing their father’s flock in Shechem. Yeshua was sent out of His Father’s house in heaven to check on His Father’s flock (the Jewish people)...and He says, “I was sent only to the lost sheep of Israel.” – Matthew 15:24

Some rabbis say that Jacob sent out Yosef because it was known that the ten brothers were abusing their father’s flock. Although we can’t know this for certain because the text does not tell us, we do know that this has indeed happened throughout history with the religious leadership, and we see the LORD God chastising the shepherds of Israel in Ezekiel 34 for their ill treatment of His people, the sheep of His pasture.

I personally believe that the dots or “jots” over the word “flock” in Genesis 37 are telling us to pay attention to the “flocks of Jacob” which are the Jewish people, and to the story of Joseph, which is a story about our Messiah and the final redemption of the flock, the nation of Israel. There are over 100 parallels between Joseph and Messiah. Mentioning each one is beyond the scope of this teaching. However, I encourage you to research and study them for yourself. Knowing these things will enrich your understanding of our Messiah and help you to know Him more intimately. There is nothing in this world that is better than that!

Study well! “Be diligent to present yourself approved to God, a worker who does not need to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth.” (2 Timothy 2:15).

Note: Many people ask me how they can see the jots and tittles themselves. You can purchase a Hebrew-English *Chumash* or *Tanakh* from www.artscroll.com or possibly from www.amazon.com. The *Chumash* is only the Torah (Genesis – Deuteronomy). The *Tanakh* is the entire body of Jewish Scriptures, or what Christians refer to as the Old Testament. Although many prefer the interlinear text,

for the ease of seeing the jots and tittles, I personally prefer the Hebrew text on one page and the English on the other.