

VERSES TO TAKE NOTE OF

Throughout the Tanak or the Pre-Messianic Scriptures there are 10 places where the ancient scribes have added two or more dots to words or word combinations that have puzzled commentators and Bible students throughout the ages. While the vowels in the Hebrew language are usually added BELOW the words, these dots were added ABOVE certain words and phrases in the Old Testament. This is a **unique feature** of the Hebrew Scriptures and it is quite certain that the ancient scribes wanted to convey a certain (hidden?) message via these dotted words. According to one view some of these dotted words were given with the Torah at Mount Sinai and originated with the Creator Himself, and the idea was that those who would read these words, would look at them very carefully, in an effort to understand the full and deepest meaning of those words. It is impossible to know whether this is true, or not, but it is certainly worthwhile to look into this matter and try to find out exactly why they have been marked in this special way.

Just briefly, the ten instances are: (1) Gen 18:9 אֵלָיו “elau” – and they (the three “heavenly” visitors) said **to him** (Avraham); (2) Gen 33:4 וַיִּשָּׁקֵהוּ “vayishakehu” – **and he** (Esau) **kissed him** (Yaakov); (3) Gen 37:12 אֶת־צֹאן “et-tse’on” – **the flock** (belonging to Yaakov, the father of the 12 tribes); (4) Num 3:39 וְאַהֲרֹן “ve-aharon” – **and Aharon** (counted the Levites, together with Mosheh); (5) Deu 29:29 לָנוּ וְלִבְנֵינוּ (“lanu ulevaneinu” – (the hidden matters are for Yahweh our Elohim, but the revealed matters are) **for us and for our children**); (6) 2 Sam 19:19 אֲשֶׁר־יָצָא “asher yatsa” – (the day) **that he** (David) **left** (Jerusalem); (7) Isa 44:9 הֵמָּה “hemmah” – **they** (the idol-worshippers, are their own witnesses, but you are my witnesses, says Yahweh); (8) Ezek 41:20 הַחֵיכָל “hahekhal” – (cherubim and palms trees were placed onto the wall of) **the temple**); (9) Ezek 46:22 מְחֻקְצוֹת “mekhuktsa’ot” – (the four) **corners** (of the courtyard having the same measure); (10) Ps 27:13 לִוְלֵי “lulei” – **what if** (I had not believed to see the goodness of Yahweh in the land of the living?).

Let us do what some of the sages have suggested for a very long time – looking at these verses carefully and trusting Yahweh to help us come to a better understanding of his Word. In some of the verses above it is very difficult to find the hidden meaning of the dotted words, but in others there is a **richness of meaning** that surfaces when one is prepared to take time and dig a little deeper.

A good place to start is Gen 18:9, which is part of this week’s Torah portion (Gen 18-22). Avraham is surprised by the sudden appearance of three visitors. They look like ordinary men and Avraham asks them to stay and prepares a huge meal for them. But the writer of the text tells us specifically that it was **Yahweh** that appeared to him by the terebinth trees of Mamre, while he was sitting in the tent door in the heat of the day. So, what happened here? Was it three men that paid him a visit? Was it Yahweh? Or was it both? And why is the Hebrew word that means **“to him”** a dotted word? I believe the words, “to him”, is highlighted to tell us that on the surface it appeared to Avraham (or: “to him”) that these were three ordinary men, but in reality it was Yahweh who appeared to him in human form. There is absolutely nothing in this passage that allows us to read into this appearance ideas related to trinity or Y’shua

making an appearance before his actual birth. The only truth that may be taken out of this episode, legitimately, is that Yahweh may appear or reach out to people in a human form or in episodes that may have the outward appearance of something ordinary while, in fact, it may turn out to be something quite extraordinary.

In Gen 37:12 we read about the 11 brothers of Joseph who didn't have a good feeling about Joseph – especially because of his dreams. At one stage the brothers (without Joseph) were sent to Shekhem to tend to the flock of their father. The phrase “**the flock**” is also one of the ten dotted phrases in the Hebrew Scriptures. Why is that? There may be other reasons, but I believe that the writer wanted us to look carefully at the concept of the father's flock throughout Scriptures. Is it not an essential Biblical truth that our heavenly Father has a flock for which He cares very deeply? Is it not written in Ps 77:20 that Yahweh had lead his people like a flock by the hand of Mosheh and Aharon? Is it not true that David was taken from where he was looking after a flock, to become a ruler over the people of Yahweh (2 Sam 7:8)? Did Yahweh not promise that He would feed his flock and make them lie down and that He would substitute the false shepherds with a true shepherd out of the house of David (Ezek 34)? And is Y'shua of Nazareth, the good shepherd who cared deeply for his flock, and continues to do so, not a fulfilment of this promise?

In Deut 29:29 Mosheh, shortly before his death, declares in the Name of Yahweh: “The secret matters belong to Yahweh our Elohim, but what is revealed belongs to us and to our children forever, to do all the Words of this Torah.” What is the meaning of this and why are the words, “**for us and for our children**” supplemented with no less than ten dots on the top? There is a beautiful truth in this statement. Within the text of the Torah there are many things that may be regarded as “hidden” or “not yet revealed”. Things with regards to the future, the promises of Yahweh, the end times, the blessings and the curses and the specific format in which these blessings and curses may be manifested in future. These may all be regarded as “secret matters”. They are not yet revealed. They belong to Yahweh. He knows all the details of these things. The what's and the when's and the how's. It is not for us to spend all our thinking and time and efforts on these things. We need to focus on the **revealed things** – that which is not hidden. And what are these? This verse is quite clear. The revealed things are the words and the wisdom and the commandments of the Torah. These are the things that belong to us and should always remain in the center of our thoughts and words and deeds.

In Ps 27:13 the rhetorical question is asked, “What if I had not believed to see the goodness of Yahweh in the land of the living?” And once again, the words “**what if**” is dotted. Let us think about it. What if this belief played no part in my life at all? Where would I have been? What would have become of me? How am I going to proceed into the future if I have no hope to see the goodness of Yahweh? How am I to survive in this present life if I have no expectation of a future land of the living? What if I never heard the prayer coming from the lips of Y'shua, in Joh 17:3, “And this is everlasting life, that they should know You, the only true Elohim, and Y'shua the Messiah whom You have sent.” And even worse, what if I had indeed heard these words, but continued with my life and my ideals and my hopes without making the slightest move, pretending that those words had no meaning at all?