**Mat 5:17**  Think not that I am come to destroy the law, or the prophets: I am not come to destroy, but to fulfil.

**Mat 5:18**  For verily I say unto you, Till heaven and earth pass, **one jot or one tittle** shall in no wise pass from the law, till all be fulfilled.

In this passage, Yahushua is making a statement concerning the Torah and the Prophets, a Hebrew expression referring to the Tanak (Old Testament). Much of Christian dogma today teaches that the “Old Testament Law” is no longer relevant in the life of the believer today, despite what the Messiah says here.

Within this passage is the phrase “one jot and one tittle”, which prompts many to ask what it means that not one jot nor one tittle shall pass from the Law.

Before we discuss the meaning of jot and tittle, we’re going to dissect this verse so you, the reader, can understand how the meaning of jot and tittle should be understood in the context of Matthew 5.

First, let’s define certain words.

**Destroy**: stg’s **#G2647** “kataluō”, from two words meaning, (G2596) down and (G3089) to loosen; to loosen down, to demolish, to halt, destroy, dissolve, come to nought, overthrow, throw down. Refers to the act of making something less, as in diminishing its relevance or authority.

**Fulfill**: stg’s **#G4137** “plēroō”, from (G4134) replete; to make replete, to cram *full*, level up. Refers to the act of making something fuller, bringing it to completion.

**Jot**: stg’s #**G2503** “iōta”, of Hebrew origin (the tenth letter of the Hebrew alphabet- yod “”); “iota”, the name of the eighth letter of the Greek alphabet, put (figuratively) for a very small part of anything. Refers to the smallest letter of any alphabet, like the letter “i” in English.

**Tittle**: stg’s #**G2762** “keraia”, feminine of a presumed derivative of the base of G2768; something horn like, that is, (specifically) the apex of a Hebrew letter (figuratively the least particle). Refers to the tiniest brushstroke of a letter, like the dot (•) above the letter “i”.

**Fulfilled**: stg’s #**G1096** “ginomai”, A prolonged and middle form of a primary verb; to cause to be, to become, used with great latitude. Refers contextually to complete fulfillment, i.e. the glass being completely full.

The difference between the Greek words “plēroō” and “ginomai” is one of action. Pleroo is the act of filling up a glass, while ginomai is the glass completely full.

Yahushua is discussing our knowledge and understanding of the will and purpose of YHWH in the lives of His people. His people had a partial (half-full) understanding of His Word and purpose, so they’re understanding was not complete. Like a glass half-full, there was still plenty of room left in the glass, plenty of things they did not yet understand.

Messiah did not come to change or in any way diminish the Law/Torah’s relevance in the life of a believer, nor in any way diminish our responsibility to live in obedience to it as believers. He did, however, come to increase our understanding of what YHWH had said in His Word through both His teaching and His behavior.

He not only came to give us more understanding of what the Law/Torah means, but He also came to live it out completely as our example, so we could walk it out through our belief in Him.

Following this passage, Messiah shows us a deeper meaning of what it means to murder, saying it was more than the act of killing, because having hate in your heart is what makes us murderers. He also teaches that adultery is more than just the act of having sexual interaction with someone’s spouse, but it’s looking at someone to lust or (desire) them, etc.

The phrase, “jot and tittle” is equivalent to the English phrase, “dot the ‘i’ and cross the ‘t’”. Messiah is emphasizing the fact that the Law/Torah/Word of YHWH is eternal (Psalms 119:89; Ecclesiastes 3:14), it cannot be added to nor taken away from (Deuteronomy 4:2; 12:32; Ecclesiastes 3:14; Proverbs 30:6 and Revelation 22:18-19).

Not the smallest letter (jot) neither the slightest brushstroke (tittle) will pass away from the written Torah, as long as the heavens and the earth remain.

This is saying more than the Law/Torah will continue to exist, because it also refers to the Law/Torah’s significance in the life of believers as the only means of “living righteously” before a set apart (holy) Elohim.

Technically, the word “jot” is referring specifically to the Hebrew letter “yod”, the 10th letter of the Hebrew alphabet.



The “yod” is the smallest letter in the Hebrew alphabet and represents the English “Y”. Consider the Name.



The Hebrew language is written from right to left, so the first letter in the Name is “yod”, as you can see it is the smallest letter and it is printed above the center line.

The other letters, “hey” - “waw” - “hey” represent the size of most of the rest of the Hebrew letters of the alphabet.

**NOTE**: Most modern Hebrew speakers consider the “waw” to be “vav” and so they write the four letters of The Name as “YHVH” instead of “YHWH”. They say that there are no vowels in the Hebrew language, yet the ancient Jewish historian Josephus, when talking about the high priest head covering, states that the Name consists four vowels.

“A mitre also of fine linen encompassed his head, which was tied by a blue ribbon, about which there was another golden crown, in which was engraven the sacred name - it consists of four vowels.” Josephus (Flavius Yusef) in “War of the Jews” book 5, chapter 5 v.7.

The “jot and tittle” are the absolute smallest parts of any writing and Messiah is simply trying to say that absolutely nothing of the Law/Torah and Prophets will change, be done away with, or be diminished by Him, or anyone else for that matter, as long as the heavens and the earth remain.

**NOTE**: Wikipedia defines “jot and tittle” as: smallest details.

(https://en.wiktionary.org/wiki/jot\_and\_tittle)

Below is a column from the “got questions.org” website, it is a Christian website that does not use the Name, however, despite this they give a good explanation of what “jot and tittle” means.

**What is a jot? What is a tittle?**

The following is quoted from: https://www.gotquestions.org/jot-tittle.html

(Got Questions is a Christian Org. which does not use the Name)

**Question: "What is a jot? What is a tittle? What does it mean that neither a jot nor a tittle will disappear from God’s Law?"**

**Answer:  “**In [Matthew 5:17](https://biblia.com/bible/esv/Matt%205.17), Jesus assures His audience [on the mount](https://www.gotquestions.org/sermon-on-the-mount.html) that He had not come to [abolish the Law](https://www.gotquestions.org/abolish-fulfill-law.html) and the Prophets; rather, He had come to fulfill them. Then, in verse 18, Jesus emphasizes the eternal nature of God’s Word: “For [verily](https://www.gotquestions.org/verily-verily.html) I say unto you, Till heaven and earth pass, one jot or one tittle shall in no wise pass from the law, till all be fulfilled” (KJV). His statement naturally prompts the question of what’s a jot? And what’s a tittle?

“Most of us are unfamiliar with jots and tittles because most of us do not read the Hebrew language. Jots and tittles have to do with letters and pen strokes in Hebrew writing. A jot is the tenth letter in the Hebrew alphabet and the smallest. It was written above the line and looks to us rather like an apostrophe:

 

*“Jot* is related to our modern English word *iota*, meaning “a very small amount.” The Hebrew spelling is *yod* or *yodh*. Many Bibles have a picture of a yod in [Psalm 119](https://biblia.com/bible/esv/Ps%20119). Check out the section title coming just before verse 73.

“A tittle is even smaller than a jot. A tittle is a letter extension, a pen stroke that can differentiate one Hebrew letter from another. An example can be seen in the comparison between the Hebrew letters resh and daleth (or dalet):
  

“The resh (on the left) is made with one smooth stroke. The daleth (on the right) is made with two strokes of the pen. The letters are very similar to each other, but the distinguishing mark of the daleth is the small extension of the roof of the letter:
 

“That extension is a tittle. See [Psalm 119:25](https://biblia.com/bible/esv/Ps%20119.25) and [153](https://biblia.com/bible/esv/Psalm%20119.153) for pictures of the daleth and resh, respectively.

“When Jesus said, “Till heaven and earth pass, one jot or one tittle shall in no wise pass from the law, till all be fulfilled” in [Matthew 5:18](https://biblia.com/bible/esv/Matt%205.18), He was stating emphatically that God’s Word is [true](https://www.gotquestions.org/is-the-Bible-true.html) and trustworthy. God has spoken, His words have been written down accurately, and what God has said will surely come to pass. Fulfillment is inevitable. Even the smallest letter of the Law will be fulfilled. Even the smallest pen stroke of the Prophets will be accomplished. The NLT translates the verse this way: “Until heaven and earth disappear, not even the smallest detail of God's law will disappear until its purpose is achieved.

“Doubters will doubt, and mockers will mock, but God’s Word will not change: “Your word, LORD, is eternal; it stands firm in the heavens” ([Psalm 119:89](https://biblia.com/bible/esv/Ps%20119.89)). The gospel changes lives: “‘The word of the Lord endures forever.’ And this is the word that was preached to you” ([1 Peter 1:25](https://biblia.com/bible/esv/1%20Pet%201.25)). God is reliable, and so is His Word—every jot and tittle of it.”

Though we agree with how the author of the above article understands and explains the meaning of “one jot and one title”, we believe he has omitted, perhaps ignorantly, that this phrase also implies to the authority and the relevance of the Torah in the lives of the Believer today.

Most Christian teachers today will agree with everything this article says about the Law/Word, yet they do not practice what it says because they no longer consider the Law relevant in the lives of believers today, believing that Messiah fulfilled the Law, so we no longer have to obey it.

This, and many like it, is a case where they know what it says and what it means, but they don’t believe it applies to them and so they are saying one thing but doing another. The Scripture calls this hypocrisy, something YHWH hates.