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Grace & Truth

We have received several e-mails regarding John 1:17. It's quoted to us normally in the NIV. Though this version is really not that good of an interpretation for this verse, we will address it in this version.

Here is the verse.

John 1:17

For the law was given through Moses; grace and truth came through Jesus Christ.

When reading this verse in isolation, it can indeed give an appearance that Yeshua brought something different from what Moses gave. However, when we read the previous verse, we see a little more context. Compare.

John 1:16-17

From the fullness of his grace we have all received one blessing after another. For the law was given through Moses; grace and truth came through Jesus Christ.

Verse 16 says one blessing after another. Then verse 17 gives examples of those blessings. But the question then becomes, how do the blessings that Yeshua brings correlate with the blessings that Moses brought? Do they connect together at all? Or are we to believe that which Yeshua gave trumps that which Moses gave.

We must first understand that which Moses gave was indeed considered a blessing.

Deuteronomy 28:1-2

If you fully obey the LORD your God and carefully follow all his commands I give you today, the LORD your God will set you high above all the nations on earth. All these blessings will come upon you and accompany you if you obey (Yahweh) the LORD your God:

So there is no doubt that John was referencing that which Moses gave which was indeed a blessing. So how does that blessing relate to the blessing that Yeshua gave? Many would say here that it did away with all which Moses gave. But fact of the matter is, actually, it's just the opposite.

As detailed in our teaching titled “The Lost Sheep”, the northern tribes of Israel were divorced. The southern kingdom was later noted as even being worse than the northern. Thus the words of Isaiah:

Isaiah 53:6

We all, like sheep, have gone astray, each of us has turned to his own way; and (Yahweh) the LORD has laid on him the iniquity of us all.

As a whole, God’s people were separated from him. Until, that is, Yeshua came. Please watch our teachings “The Lost Sheep” & “Nailed to the Cross” for a greater understanding on this.

Yeshua came to bring His people back in covenant with the Father. Thus, the words of John...

“grace and truth came through Jesus Christ.”

Grace AND truth.

What is truth?

Psalm 119:142

Thy righteousness is an everlasting righteousness, and Thy law is truth.

But what is John’s understanding and interpretation of Truth? Is it the same as the psalmist? After all, John is the one talking here in John chapter 1. However he defines it, combine it with grace, and that’s what Yeshua gave. So what was Truth to John? Compare...

John 17:17

Sanctify them by the truth; your word is truth.

Keep in mind here that it was grace and truth that Yeshua brought.

And here we see Yeshua saying that the Word of God is truth. If interested, for more detail on the Word of God, please see our teaching “Narrow Minded”.

But in short, we see Yeshua saying the Word /Logos of God as being the Truth. The Word of God consists of the Law of God; there’s no way around it. In fact, Isaiah declares that the Word of God stands forever and here we see Peter quoting Isaiah...

1 Peter 1:23

For you have been born again, not of perishable seed, but of imperishable, through the living and enduring word (logos) of God.

He then quote Isaiah...

1 Peter 1:24

²⁴ For, “All men are like grass, and all their glory is like the flowers of the field; the grass withers and the flowers fall, ²⁵ but the word (rhema) of (Yahweh) the Lord stands forever.” And this is the word (rhema) that was preached to you.

Here we see Peter discussing the “logos of God” in verse 23 and defines it by referencing the Hebrew Scriptures of Isaiah. What was the word of the Lord to Isaiah? There is no doubt. It was the Law. Look again at 1 Peter 1:25.

1 Peter 1:25

but the word (rhema) of (Yahweh) the Lord stands forever. And this is the word (rhema) that was preached to you.

Again, we see Peter equating the Logos of God in verse 23 as the “rhema of the Lord” in verse 25.

Where else do we see the “rhema of the Lord”?

Consider

Romans 10:8

But what does it say? “The word (rhema) is near you; it is in your mouth and in your heart,” that is, the word (rhema) of faith we are proclaiming:

This is Paul quoting from Deuteronomy chapter 30. Compare.

Deuteronomy 30:14

No, the word is very near you; it is in your mouth and in your heart so you may obey it.

So, what is this word that is to be obeyed? Let’s continue reading.

Deuteronomy 30:15-16

¹⁵ See, I set before you today life and prosperity, death and destruction. For I command you today to love (Yahweh) the LORD your God, to walk in his ways, and to keep his commands, decrees and laws; then you will live and increase, and (Yahweh) the LORD your God will bless you in the land you are entering to possess.

The word that Paul was quoting AND proclaiming here in Romans 10 is the LAW. This happens to be the same word that Peter was proclaiming in 1 Peter 1:25, which was equated as the “logos of God” in verse 23. Therefore, making the “logos of God,” the Law of God. For a further study on these verses in Romans, please see our teaching titled “The Prayer of Salvation.”

It’s clear that the Word/Logos of God is indeed a reference to the Law of God. That being said, we know that Yeshua made it clear in John 17:17 that the Word/Logos of God is truth.

Showing us that the Word/Logos, the Law and the Truth are all interchangeable.

So what does that tell us for John 1:17?

It tells us that Yeshua gave us the exact same as Moses did but did so in grace. Remember, God’s people as a whole had fallen away. Both the northern and southern kingdoms were considered rebellious as a whole.

And Yeshua came to bring His people back to the blessings that the Father gave through Moses. So

Yeshua brought forth the Word of God again but did so in grace. Thus the words of John...

John 1:16 -17

From the fullness of his grace we have all received one blessing after another. For the law was given through Moses; grace and truth came through Jesus Christ.

It's like saying "I brought the meal yesterday. But today, this guy brought desserts and dinner."

Meaning what? Both brought the food to eat, but the second guy brought dessert.

Likewise in John 1:17. He's not making a distinction between the two. He's actually showing the same came from both, but adds how the second came. And it came through grace.

Thus, the words spoken in verse 16.

John 1:16

From the fullness of his grace we have all received one blessing after another.

It's truly a blessing to walk in the ways of the Father. And that is why Yeshua came. To enable us to walk in His ways again.

This is why we see Yeshua saying...

Matthew 23:1-3

Then Jesus said to the crowds and to his disciples: "The teachers of the law and the Pharisees sit in Moses' seat. So you must obey them and do everything they tell you. But do not do what they do, for they do not practice what they preach.

He was all about getting people to return to the ways of the Father.

It's interesting to note how John mentions both Moses and Yeshua in verse 17. I say this because Yeshua is the prophet that was foretold to come who is likened unto Moses. Compare.

Deuteronomy 18:15

(Yahweh) The LORD your God will raise up for you a prophet like me from among your own brothers. You must listen to him.

And this is even referenced in the book of Acts.

Acts 3:19-23

Repent, then, and turn to God, so that your sins (which is breaking the law by the way) may be wiped out, that times of refreshing may come from the Lord, and that he may send the Christ, who has been appointed for you — even Jesus. He must remain in heaven until the time comes for God to restore everything, as he promised long ago through his holy prophets. For Moses said, 'The Lord your God will raise up for you a prophet like me from among your own people; you must listen to everything he tells you. Anyone who does not listen to him will be completely cut off from among his people.'

Yeshua is the last hope to come back into covenant. The giving of the Law through Moses enabled us to walk in the blessings of the Father. But His people rejected and turned from His ways. Yet through His grace, He provided a way back for His people to walk in His blessings again. Thus, the words of John...

John 1:16-17

From the fullness of his grace we have all received one blessing after another. For the law was given through Moses; grace and truth came through Jesus Christ.

We hope you have enjoyed this study. Remember, continue to test everything.

Shalom

Shalom, and may Yahweh bless you in walking in the whole Word of God.

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