

Could Jesus “Do Away” with Himself?

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Recently I have had several conversations with people who adamantly declare there is no need to follow the Laws from the Old Testament, yet like many Christians, they correctly asserted that they are not “lawless” either! To me, this appears to be related to that double minded belief that there are two standards for faith: one for the Jew and one for Christians. It also seems to indicate a belief there are really two different “gods” and two different “laws” represented in the Bible. Kaye Arthur promoted this idea many years ago in her book, Israel My Beloved, just for one example though there are MANY others. My pastor at the time helped me identify this as he knew there is One faith, One baptism, One Word, One Shepherd.

The idea rests on several flows of thought. First century Marcion’s separation from the God of the OT still permeates much of the church today; that the NT replaces or nullifies the OT; that Jesus fulfilled the Law so we don’t have to and so forth; that the church replaces the Jews. (Please see article on SAM website: “Free in the Spirit?”) Christian believers are comfortably ensconced on the idea that they ARE keeping all the commandments of God that matter today.

I think one of the verses used to support this is:

For the law was given through Moses, *but* grace and truth came through Jesus Christ. John 1:17 NKJV

Although some have since removed it, most Bible translations still include that little italicized word in the middle: “*but*.” It implies that they are in opposition to one another: Moses and the Law vs. Jesus and grace and truth.

Checking the foreword in most Bibles you will find that, in general, italicized words were added to the text by the translators, as they tried to convey the message from one language to another.

CONTEXT: In this case, the added word “but” may reflect the belief of the translator, that there IS opposition between Moses/Law and Jesus/Grace. Yet, as I have written before, that is not possible! If there was opposition between them, and Jesus changed anything of the Word/Law, He would be a false prophet. When considered, one realizes that grace can’t exist without the Law as a foundation. There has to be a standard in order for grace to be applied. It is meaningless without that standard.

Could there be more than one way to salvation? We just can’t see it that way! When I was first considering the importance or irrelevance of the Whole Word for today, I was prayerfully seeking an answer to why He allowed errors to continue for SO long if it is really right to follow the Whole Word?

Briefly, the understanding I received was that He allowed the errors for a season but now it is time to make the Bride ready without spot or wrinkle. What can you say to that? It is always His timing for everything under the sun!

I suspect readers may be wondering why I write so often about this confusion and what we believe is the call to honor the Whole Word of God today, not just parts of it. It is in part because of our calling at SAM to be a part of preparing His Bride! (Please see series *Preparing Messiah's Bride* on our website.)

Somehow, because Christians keep some of the Law, but generally reject the teachings commanded in the whole Word, and see them as "bondage," the concept of keeping and walking in His Law any differently just goes over heads or past ears. It seems foreign and impossible at first thought! As I grew in understanding of the Hebraic context, I understood that these matters are "both/and" Hebraic block logic, and not the Greek "either/or" mindset.

CONTEXT: I wonder if people have kept in mind that when Paul wrote his famous words to Timothy that the only Scripture at the time WAS what we call the OT: the Torah, the Prophets and the Writings.

All scripture is given by inspiration of **God**, and **is** profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness: That the man of **God** may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto **all** good works. 2 Timothy 3: 16-17 KJV

What we call the NT was not yet compiled or even all written as yet! The letters and eyewitness reports of what happened with Jesus/Yeshua the Messiah were what would BECOME what we call the NT. So that leaves the OT to be the initial witness that allowed the disciples and all others to study and see for themselves that Yeshua was/IS the One. Without the Torah, the Prophets and the Writings, no one could have recognized Messiah. It is the Foundational Word for all else that followed, or if you will, the shadow of the substance that was yet to come.

CONTEXT: Please read Psalm 119 for the descriptions of His Torah/Law...good, wonderful, comforting, reviving, better than gold or silver,etc. Do you receive this Word or turn away from it?

Blessed are those whose way is blameless,
Who walk in the Law of the LORD.
Blessed are those who comply with His testimonies,
And seek Him with all *their* heart.
They also do no injustice;
They walk in His ways.
You have ordained Your precepts,
That we are to keep *them* diligently.
Oh that my ways may be established
To keep Your statutes!
Then I will not be ashamed
When I look at all Your commandments.
I will give thanks to You with uprightness of heart,

When I learn Your righteous judgments.

I will keep Your statutes; Psalm 119: 1-8 NASB

CONTEXT: When this next verse was written, it is also true that only the OT, or Torah, Prophets and Writings WAS the ONLY Scripture referred to:

Until I come, devote yourself to the public reading of Scripture, to exhortation, to teaching.

1 Timothy 4:13 ESV

Some translations include “public” and others do not. “Vine’s Expository Dictionary” confirms this sense of reading in public gatherings. The implication seems to be to encourage the reading of the Scriptures in groups, such as the weekly assembly and perhaps other places as well. So what Scripture were they directed to read, exhort, and teach from? What we call the Torah or the OT.

Doing this teaching by way of the written word in WCN is our “public reading” of Scripture to exhort and teach. We understand that many have come into salvation and rejoice for that! Yet, there is also an ongoing sanctification process by which we mature into Messiah that we do not want anyone to miss or downplay. Last month I wrote that it is a personal choice: after salvation has been granted. It will determine if we will be called least or great in His Kingdom. By Yeshua’s own words, **teaching and living** the Whole Word now, OR NOT, will determine our status then.

I believe that many are satisfied just to know they are “in” and really aren’t concerned about how they will be regarded in eternity. That is certainly their choice!

For us, we see that we are dealing with the Creator of the Universe, of Heaven and Earth, and of all of us. To set aside the desire to please the One Who made our salvation possible just doesn’t seem like a wise choice! Once we have been saved, we still have daily choices to make in our walk.

“Good, better, best: never let it rest...until good is better and better is best.” These were the words of my former pastor from his seminary pastor. Perhaps compare with the acceptable, the good and perfect will of God?

CONTEXT: We confirm again and again in Scripture that Messiah Yeshua/Jesus and the Father are One, in purpose, in plan, in commandments. We confirm again and again that Yeshua IS YHWH, that He was there at the beginning, and will be with us throughout all time until the end.

In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. He was in the beginning with God. All things were made through Him, and without Him nothing was made that was made...**And the Word became flesh and dwelt among us**, and we beheld His glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth. John 1: 1-3, 14 NKJV

For I have not spoken on My own *authority*; but the Father who sent Me gave Me a command, what I should say and what I should speak. And I know that His command is everlasting life. Therefore, whatever I speak, just as the Father has told Me, so I speak.” John 12:49-50 NKJV

Yes, Yeshua Messiah/ Jesus of Nazareth is both the written and the living Torah/Word, and He is Who we are committed to follow and walk in His footsteps, as He walked as our Father directed.

Since He was so clear that He did not make up His own ideas/teachings/commands but only honored our Father’s ways, we just can’t imagine how He could or would have turned away from those commands and in effect, “done away” with Himself and His own Torah/Law!

CONTEXT: Yeshua/Jesus has said that He is the Alpha and Omega, Alef and Tav in Hebrew... the First and the Last. This way of speaking is called a “**Merism.**” It means “everything from a to z, or soup to nuts” as we might say, which includes everything in between! So again, we just can’t see how He could or would have changed what happens in the middle! We began and will end in The Garden! His commandments stand. The character of our God is that He doesn’t change, that He doesn’t lie, that He is all good with no evil in Him. He has no beginning and no end.

Do you think you are honoring God “just enough” to be saved? What do you do with the warnings to Ephesus to not lose your first love of Him?

Do you think there ARE two sets of Laws for salvation?

As for the assembly, there shall be one statute for you and for the stranger who resides among you, a permanent statute throughout your generations; as you are, so shall the stranger be before the LORD. ¹⁶There is to be one law and one ordinance for you and for the stranger who resides with you.” Numbers 15:15-16 NASB

Do you think that the Law is no longer valid?

For truly I say to you, until heaven and earth pass away, not the smallest letter or stroke of a letter shall pass from the Law, until all is accomplished! Matthew 5:18 NASB

The grass withers, the flower fades,
But the word of our God stands forever. Isaiah 40: 8 NASB

All flesh is like grass, and all its glory is like the flower of grass.
The grass withers and the flower falls off, but the Word of the LORD endures forever. 1 Peter 1:24-25 NASB

That we henceforth be no more children, tossed to and fro, and carried about with every wind of doctrine, by the sleight of men, and cunning craftiness, whereby they lie in wait to deceive;

Ephesians 4:14 KJV

Context, context, context! These words to the Ephesians were written to those converts to the faith in Ephesus, a hotbed of idolatry, to encourage them to remain faithful to the teachings they had received from the apostles...not to be drawn back into the pagan world, not to be tossed to and fro with those who loved to cause strife and division, much as we see today. Although, today, the context has been reversed... and too many say that the changes and distortions that have crept in from the beginning are to them, what needs to be defended!!! We need to remember to urgently seek the faith given once for all to the saints, and not be pulled away by today's cunning and crafty people who misrepresent the context.

Please do your due diligence and read for the context ... not just one verse or two, but the whole portion of Scripture. May we all have eyes to see and ears to hear what the Spirit says to the assemblies!