

April 30, 2015

## What About Grace? – Part 4

Shalom Saints! Today we are going to be continuing on with the teaching *What About Grace?* This is week number four that we have been looking at this. As many of you know, the default response for people when you begin to talk to them about the commands, about the law, about our responsibility and accountability to the commandments of YeHoVaH, that default verse or statement is:

“Well, what about grace?”

Today we’re going to pick up where we left off last week. Hopefully we will bring this portion to a conclusion. We started this teaching out in *Ephesians 2:8*.

Eph 2:8-9 – “For by **grace** are ye **saved** through **faith**; and that not of yourselves: *it is the **gift** of God:* <sup>9</sup>Not of **works**, lest any man should **boast**.”

We broke down each of those words. We did that in the teaching in the first week and in teaching number two. Then we moved on and began to identify other passages of scripture. Last week we talked about Martin Luther and his impact on the church as we know it.

Many people hear of “Church Fathers” and often times don’t know who these Church Fathers are or were. And yet in Bible seminaries and colleges you will hear of Irenaeus. You will hear of Tertullian. You will hear of Polycarp and many of these individuals who have had an impact on the church as we know it today.

But no person has impacted the church as we know it today and the doctrines that people ascribe to, as much as Martin Luther. Last week we began to look at some of the

things that Martin Luther did, to try to get an understanding.

We find that the doctrine or theology of grace did not come from Messiah or Paul, but from Luther and Westerners' theological interpretation of Luther, Paul and Messiah. Many of the people that you will deal with, that you will communicate with and that you will debate with and at times even argue with, are arguing from a theological position of a denominational interpretation of Paul's writings and of Yeshua's writings.

Of course they will throw in the early Church Fathers, who basically forged the impression of what the Christian Church is today. The impact of the church as we know it, came from individuals outside of the book. The early Church Fathers or the Church Fathers are not found in the book. And yet people use the book to validate the Church Fathers' positions.

I will tell you, ladies and gentlemen. You can use this book to validate any position you desire. All you have to do is to misread or misinterpret or take a verse of scripture out of context and make it say what you want. You can string verses together and make them say what you want.

This is why in our Discipleship training we began to look at all of the principles of interpretation: hermeneutics (the art and science of interpretation) and biblical hermeneutics (the art and science of biblical interpretation).

We did this so that we can rightly divide; so that we can interpret the word the way it was written, versus reading into it. We identified this as *eisegesis*, instead of taking out of it what is there, which is *exegesis*. These are theological terms that we have learned in our Discipleship training. These will aid us in interpreting the Bible.

Historically three groups emerged outside of Judaism. Those are the Catholics, the Protestants/Lutherans (Catholic Reformers) and of course the Anabaptists. The Anabaptists were part of the Protestants. The Protestants

and the Anabaptists basically protested against the Catholic Church. The Catholic Church was doing things in its day. It had a hierarchy and a monopoly on the word to the point where individuals within the Catholic Church identified the fallacy of the papacy and began to address it.

Like any other time in history when you begin to address the leadership of a particular regime, you can find yourself on the outs. In some cases you can find yourself dead. All an individual has to do is to demonize you, identify you as a heretic and get enough people to believe. Remember that Yeshua was crucified as a heretic. We don't like hearing that, but that is the bottom line.

He was considered to be a blasphemer. What caused him to be crucified was because it was identified that he had blasphemed (according to the scripture). Blaspheming warranted the death penalty. A blasphemer then is a modern day rendition of a heretic. It is someone who is preaching something false.

Yeshua was considered to be a false teacher, a false prophet, a false Messiah, a blasphemer and a heretic. Therefore he was killed, but basically he gave up his life.

The Protestants, Lutherans is what they became known as until religion left Germany. It is amazing that religion or the faith that we know of today as Christianity, started in Rome. It literally started in Jerusalem as they would say. But how many of you know that Jerusalem was under siege by Rome? Rome occupied Israel.

Therefore as Rome occupied Israel, the dominant force was Roman. Rome occupied Israel. Those who were part of Israel were under the control (if you would) and occupation of Rome. It is amazing that Roman Catholicism didn't start in Rome. It started in Israel.

It was an occupation or a religion that had been taken siege by the Romans. As Romans began to confess faith (the Italians/Romans). Many of them began to express faith in Messiah. One of the most famous Romans who

expressed faith in Messiah is found in the Book of *Acts*. Does anybody know what his name is? Who? Who? Well, Paul was a Roman.

Folks don't know this because they say that Paul was a Benjamite. Paul was a Roman. Paul's citizenship was of Rome. That is how he ended up in Rome, to be tried. But Paul is not who I am talking about, although Paul was a Roman. He was a Jew or a Benjamite and he was a Roman. But the first Roman that we know of – the centurion.

No, it wasn't the centurion. The centurion was in the book, the gospel, the Book of *Acts*. Does anybody know? Come on, no. Cornelius! What else was he? *Romans* chapter number what, ten? *Acts* chapter ten verse 1:

Acts 10:1 – “There was a certain man in Caesarea called Cornelius, a centurion of the band called the Italian *band*,”

Is that in your Bibles or is it a misprint in mine? What does it say? It was an *Italian band*. He was a man in Caesarea called Cornelius, a centurion. So you are partially right, but you weren't talking about that centurion.

Here we know that many Romans accepted Messiah. It wasn't long before there was dissention. In *Acts* 8 if you remember – we are getting way off course here. In *Acts* 8, there was a persecution. All but the apostles fled Jerusalem. In *Acts* 8:

Acts 8:1-3 – “Saul was consenting unto his death. At that time there was a great persecution against the assembly which was at Jerusalem, and they were all scattered abroad throughout the region of Judea and Samaria except the apostles.”

By the time that Jerusalem fell (if you would); not fell, but the temple was actually destroyed. At this particular time, Judaism as they knew it literally went into disarray.

Now the people who were coming up to Jerusalem for worship and for the feasts and festivals were no longer going up to Jerusalem because there was no temple there.

Ultimately Judaism in Jerusalem began to wane. The Messianic faith waned. Then this hybrid brand of what we know of as Catholicism emerged as more and more Gentiles (non-Jews) began to come into the faith. Now people began to move away from the Hebrew. They began to incorporate the languages of the land, which were Latin and Greek.

At this time, the *Septuagint*, which is the Greek version of the Old Testament Hebrew writings, was already introduced. Well, not yet, but it was coming. When it came down to having the Septuagint – I believe it was. I have to do some research on that, but I believe it was. The Septuagint or the Greek version of the Hebrew Bible was already being translated so that individuals in the Hebrew and Greek – the Greek-speaking were able to understand the scriptures.

Remember in *Acts 6*?

Acts 6:1 - "And in those days when the number of the disciples were multiplied, there arose a murmuring of the Greeks."

It was the Grecians against the Hebrews. Now you have some issues going on in the congregation where those who spoke Greek and those who spoke Hebrew begin to complain about one another. These individuals who spoke Greek; their main language was the Greek language. So the question is, how do the Greek-speaking individuals understand the Hebrew scripture?

They have to be translated. They have to be interpreted. Do you understand what I am saying? And of course it was the same thing where Latin was the dominant force. The Latin Vulgate became a major part in the translation into the various languages that we know today.

Catholics claim their authority from Peter. Protestants, which is a hybrid or a “mutant” Catholic, claim their authority from Martin Luther. Last week we dealt with Luther as it related to his position with Judaism. We dealt with Luther when it came down to his belief, his faith. And we touched a little bit on Luther and Islam. Tonight we’re going to continue down that vein. Then we are going to look at Luther and his position concerning a particular book of the Bible.

This is where Luther had some problems. This is what you will find. Because of Luther’s influence, people today have problems. People have two major problems which permeate Christianity today. The first is that the predominant Christian community has a dislike for Jewish people. It’s just there.

Now, there are some, who because of the work of Christian Zionists, have begun to move back into embracing the Jewish people. But for the majority of Christendom, there is still this dislike for the Jewish people. Then the second thing which we all have been confronted with and where it was incorporated into us as a child until our eyes were opened and we began to look for answers is a dislike or a hatred for the law.

Many people hate “the law.” Their hatred toward the law will be taken out on anyone who confesses that we are still under the law. It is not a matter of grace, ladies and gentlemen. Those who are under law are also under grace. As a matter of fact, grace is so incorporated into the law to the point where if it wasn’t for grace, none of us would be here – none of us.

Father could have destroyed everything and not started over. He could have said:

“Do you know what? I’m done!”

You know, like some of us. We get “done.” We’re just too through. He could have done that and yet the grace and mercy of the Almighty says:

“You know, if I am asking my people to endure – to have long suffering...”

He is certainly exercising long suffering by putting up with the shenanigans of His creation. Right now folks, mankind has gone off the deep end – seriously. I’m just waiting to see what the Supreme Court is going to say to see just how deep that end is.

But Luther on Islam at the time of the Marsburg Colloquy, Suleiman the Magnificent was besieging Vienna with a vast Ottoman army. Luther had argued against resisting the Turks in his 1518 *Explanation of the Ninety-five Theses*, provoking accusations of defeatism.

He saw the Turks as a scourge sent to punish Christians by God; as agents of the biblical apocalypse that would destroy the Antichrist, **whom Luther believed to be the papacy, and the Roman Church.**

You’ve got folks today who say:

“Yeah, they’re the Antimesiah. The Pope is the Antimesiah and the Catholic Church is the harlot church.”

That idea was first formulated by Luther. He consistently rejected the idea of a Holy War:

“as though our people were an army of Christians against the Turks, who were enemies of Christ. This is absolutely contrary to Christ’s doctrine and name.”

This is what Luther wrote. On the other hand, in keeping with his doctrine of the two kingdoms, Luther did support non-religious war (against the Turks).

Now you have the separation of church and state. You have the state that has vowed to defend itself against all enemies foreign and domestic. And an individual can opt-out of military service because of religious values. So a religious person cannot be forced to go to war. This was part and parcel to the idea that there is the secular and there is the religious. Luther espoused the idea that as a country we have to defend ourselves, but let the heathens do it.

Basically this is what he is saying:

“Let the people who have no faith fight for the country and the people who are of faith will pray.”

This is what he is saying. In 1526, he argued in *Whether Soldiers can be in a State of Grace* that national defense is reason for a just war. By 1529, in *On War against the Turk*, he was actively urging Emperor Charles V and the German people to fight a secular war against the Turks. He made clear however, that the spiritual or holy war against an alien faith was separate; to be waged through prayer and repentance.

This whole idea of calling a nation to prayer and repentance didn't just begin in the United States. You have people today who argue that if we want to see the hand of the Almighty on these good old United States like it was in its founding days of the Founding Fathers of this United States, that the people of the United States have to repent and go back to that old-time religion which was still without the law.

At no point in American history did America uphold the law of YeHoVaH! Now individuals will argue that the Constitution of the United States was based in part on the laws of God. There may be some truth to that. We can certainly see certain laws on the books in the Constitution. We can find them in the Torah.

But others behind Luther argued based on Luther's writings that the law should not be in the church, but in the courts. They argued that the only law that man is obligated to is not the law of God, but the laws of man that are upheld by the court system.

Today what we have is a court system that upholds the laws of the three branches of government: the executive, the judiciary and the legislative. The legislative branch makes the laws. The legislative branch is what? It consists of Congress, the House of Representatives, the Senate and Congressmen. That's the legislative branch. What do they do? They pass bills. These bills that you hear about are laws. These laws are for the governing of the citizens of these United States.

The people who make laws are the legislative branch. The people who enforce the law are the judicial branch. That is the Supreme Court. That is all of the appellate courts and all of the civil courts, the federal courts, the state courts. And of course the head of state is the executive branch. But interestingly enough you've got the executive branch of government, you've got the legislative branch of government and you've got the judicial branch of government.

This is not only in a federal system, but you've got it in a state system and you've got it in a city system. In a federal government, it's the President, it's the Supreme Court and it's the Congress. In the state government, it's the Governor. The Governor is the head of state.

Then you've got the Supreme Court – the state Supreme Court. Then you've got these individuals – state Senators and Representatives that are sent to the state capitol just as you have within the states, individuals who are sent to the federal capitol in Washington, D.C.

But then on a city level you have the Mayor. You have the Mayor who is the head of the city. You've got the Aldermen and the City Council members. You have the

legislative branch. They are making city ordinances. They are determining how deeply to get into the taxpayers' pockets.

They are making laws concerning the streets and concerning the sidewalks and when you sell your property and all of this. You have all of this government stacked on top of one another. If that wasn't enough government, now you have county government. That is drawing money and has a responsibility for the state roads and county roads.

You have the sheriffs and the police and the highway patrols. You've got all of this government that has replaced the laws of God. They have replaced the laws of YeHoVaH with the laws of men. They uphold the laws of men and decry and denounce the laws of YeHoVaH.

What you have is a whole other approach to Babel. You have a Babylon system in a whole other model. It is a Nimrod system. That's what it is. You have individuals who are not accountable to any higher power (if you would), but who seek the votes of people who are submitted to this higher power.

Luther says:

“There is a separation. The church prays and the secular government protects. They go to war. They fight. Our conscience says that the way we wage war is not like the world.”

In 1542, Luther read a Latin translation of the Qur'an. He went on to produce several critical pamphlets on Islam, which he called “Mohammedanism” or “the Turk.” Although Luther saw the Muslim faith as a tool of the devil, he was indifferent to its practice.

## Luther and Faith Alone

Luther was a faith man. He believed in justification by faith and faith alone. When it comes down to faith alone, you have people who take the grace alone approach based on Luther's faith alone view.

Luther published his German translation of the New Testament in 1522. He and his collaborators completed the translation of the Old Testament in 1534, when the whole Bible was published. He continued to work on refining the translation until the end of his life.

Others had translated the Bible into German, but Luther tailored his own translation to his own doctrine. This has been going on, ladies and gentlemen. The Scofield Bible is the Bible where they introduced the "rapture." People had no knowledge of a rapture until Scofield put in his commentary (in the notes of his Bible), about this "rapture." Folks had never heard of a rapture.

When you listen and you do the research on where he got it from, you would be astounded. But it made its way into the Bible. Now it is predominant in churches around the world! It is the predominant view that one of these good old by and by wakeup mornings, Jesus is going to come and take the church and everybody else will be left behind. They have even made movies. You know it.

When he was criticized for using the word "alone" after "faith" in *Romans* 3:28, this is what he did. I'm going to tell you. Luther made a tailor-made translation of the Bible. He inserted the word "alone" after "faith" in *Romans* 3:28. Have you checked your Bible's *Romans* 3:28?

Ro 3:28 – "Therefore we conclude that a man is justified by faith [alone] without the deeds of the law."

Luther inserted "alone." A man is justified by faith alone. Now that simple word, you would say:

“Why would that make a big difference?”

Guess what? There is a word in the Bible that has made so much of a difference in the lives of individuals that an entire holy day has been incorporated around it – Easter. One word inserted into the Bible has had a profound impact on the faith that claims its existence from the Bible. So in simply adding one word, you change the meaning. This is why YeHoVaH says:

“You will not add to it nor will you diminish from it. You don’t add one thing to it, you don’t take anything away from it because the moment you add something to it, you change the entire structure – the foundation. You’ve destroyed it simply by adding a word.”

Luther did this. Somebody caught him. I will tell you, it had to be some very insightful individuals to find one word. I mean out of all of the Bibles, out of all the words that Luther wrote, they are scrutinizing his work so much that they said:

“Okay, he added this word ‘alone.’”

This is his argument.

“[T]he text itself and its meaning of St. Paul urgently require and demand it.”

He says that if you look at what Paul meant and what he said, it requires that word being put there.

“...For in that very passage he is dealing with the main point of Christian doctrine; namely that we are justified by faith in Christ without any works of the law.”

So based on his interpretation, he said that it is justified. But when works are so completely cut away, that must mean that faith alone justifies. Do you see what he is doing? He is using deduction – the science of deduction. We're going to make this argument which, if you listen to me long enough, I'm going to lead you to my conclusion.

He says but when works are so completely cut away, if we remove works, then it *must mean* that faith alone justifies. Whoever would speak plainly and clearly about this cutting away of works would have to say that faith alone justifies us and not works. That's his argument.

Published at a time of rising demand for German language publications, Luther's version quickly became a popular and influential Bible translation. As such, it made a significant contribution to the evolution of the German language and literature.

If you think that this is interesting, wait until you do the research on how the English language came to be. It is a mixture. It is such a mixture of languages. When it comes down to translations, I have to hand it to him. Luther was a bright, brilliant individual. He knew that he had the ability to influence. At the time, he was more influential than the Pope himself!

After all, the Pope was the head of the Catholic Church. Luther had protested and had a complete following who were now getting away from the Catholic Church. They didn't really like the Catholic Church because of all of the indulgences and the elaborate lifestyles that they were living while the people were in abject poverty.

Luther became a figure with a following. He was the head of a movement. Whenever there is a head of a new movement, typically there is a need to write a new translation, a new version and to make new rules and regulations as to how it is to be governed. This is what Paul was doing when he wrote his letter.

You see, Paul wrote letters to an emerging congregation of people who had never practiced this faith before. You have individuals who were coming out of Judaism. All they knew was Judaism. They were coming into a faith that was saying that Judaism is tradition and tradition makes the word of no effect. They were leaving traditions.

You had people who were coming out of different religious backgrounds or non-religious backgrounds. They were coming together in a congregational setting like this. Now you have to bring some order and some structure. The Bible becomes a blue print if you would, on how you do that. While Paul was using the Bible<sup>1</sup> as a blueprint to bring this order and to bring this structure, people said:

“Well, if Paul is using the Bible, then his letters are filled with Bible, so it must be inspired; therefore it has a place in the Bible.”

Folks, when we begin to look behind a lot of this, most individuals – 97-98% of people of faith aren’t even interested in all of this stuff. I mean, if it’s not in the Bible, what difference does it make? Whether you know it or not, it is in the Bible.

The influence of these individuals upon the Bible found its way into the Bible. It began to forge and mold the thinking of religious people. This is why when you are dealing with people, you will find that they are not arguing from the Bible. They are arguing from doctrine – doctrines that the Bible actually refutes.

In order for people to argue their doctrines, they are left with no choice but to cut and paste. They are going to go

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<sup>1</sup> All use of the word “Bible” here with respect to Paul actually refers to the books of the *Tanakh* (the five books of “Moses” and the writings and the prophets), since the canon of the Bible wasn’t officially assembled until centuries later.

from verse to verse or from one passage to another and take verses way out of context.

Furnished with notes and prefaces by Luther and with woodcuts by Lucas Cranach that contained anti-papal imagery, it played a major role in the spread of Luther's doctrine throughout Germany. This was his translation of the Bible.

Last week I let you all in on a couple of translations. Here is one that you all may not know of. Anybody ever heard of the Hebrew/Gentile/Israelite scriptures? The Hebrew/Gentile/Israelite scripture has its translation for its groups of people.

(Grabs another book.) This book is the most influential in many of the mainline and specifically the "Word" churches. In the Word churches it's the Thompson Chain Reference Bible. And in many of the Pentecostals, especially the Holiness Pentecostals, it is the Dake's Annotated Bible.

As I shared with you all, in several of these Bibles you will find that you have notes and chain references on the inside and outside. These are leading. Basically it says in these references that if you want to cross-reference this verse, go here. If I am a Baptist, then the chain reference is going to take you to my pet verses related to this.

People see the verse reference. Some people say:

"Oh, there is a verse reference there, so that means that this must be true."

It is amazing. A number of times I have checked out the verse reference, and it has absolutely nothing to do with the verse that it is referencing!

Then of course this one has notes galore. I mean it is full of notes. They are even incorporated into the actual passages. If you are a person who believes that every word in this book is God's word from *Genesis* to *Revelation*,

then guess what? Even the commentary is the “word” of God. This is what people say:

“This is my Bible. I believe it is the word of God. It’s the unadulterated, infallible word. You can’t argue with it from *Genesis* to *Revelation*. It is His word.”

What better place to get your belief systems across than by putting it in your version of the Bible? Now you begin to control the minds, the thinking, the reading and the understanding of the people. After all, this is the only version that they use.

You know, it saddens me to some degree. We constantly get people saying:

“You know, what version of the Bible do you read from? What’s the best version of the Bible? Is there a version of the Bible that has the names the way that the names should be?”

I’ll tell you. If that version came out, people would get that and who would believe that. That would become their only source. You should never rely upon any one source – never. I don’t care who put it out.

The Luther Bible influenced other vernacular translations, such as William Tyndale’s English Bible (1525 forward). It was a precursor of the King James Bible.

## **Luther and Faith Alone**

Luther and the Book of *James* – this is where it gets interesting. Martin Luther denied that the Book of *James* was the work of an apostle. He termed it an “epistle of straw” as compared to some other books in the New Testament. He did this not in the least because of the

conflict he thought it raised with Paul on the doctrine of justification.

You see, when you move on a position of faith alone, then *James* is going to mess with you. *James* is saying:

“Wait a minute. Show me your faith. I’ll show you my works.”

Luther read *James* and said:

“Wait a minute. This doesn’t belong in the Bible.”

Why? Because it conflicted with his beliefs. This is the challenge that people will have. I’m going to tell you something. When I was a Baptist, the predominant gospel of the Baptist Church was the book of *Matthew*. This is where the formula comes from that:

“You shall baptize in the name of the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit.”

It’s the only book in the New Testament that has that formula. They argue to the death that it has to be done this way. Do you follow me?

So the Baptists – John the Baptist – the formula for baptism and with all of that, *Matthew* is the predominant gospel. When you have a predominant gospel, then what is going to happen is that you are going to find yourself coming away with a belief system. That is just like so many who believe that Yeshua celebrated the Passover with his disciples.

If you depend upon a particular version of the Bible or a particular gospel or a particular book, then you will build your doctrine upon that; and if you don’t compare them. This is why in theological circles they have what is called *Synoptic Gospels*. You have to fuse all of these gospels together to get a fuller picture of the gospel accounts.

I was exposed to the idea that in order to justify your position, you now have to discredit the positions of others. This is where I was first introduced to the idea of discrediting *Mark* and *Luke*. When you look at the disciples of Yeshua, where do Mark and Luke fit in?

How is it that Mark can write a gospel, when Mark was not a disciple? How can Luke write a gospel, when Luke was not a disciple? Do you see? You can begin to make your arguments based on the fact that Luke and Mark now have to get someone to tell them what happened. Matthew and John were eyewitnesses. Do you follow me?

In a classroom setting in a Bible College or in a Seminary like any other institute of higher learning, the professor is the professional. The students are learning from the professional professors. The professors are literally discipling. Their classroom is a discipleship center. They are shaping and forging the minds and mentalities of future pastors.

Here you are as a professor in a particular university, teaching students year after year after year. They have to go through your system. They have to pass. If you are the professor of theology in this institution, any person who is going through a theology major is going to spend a lot of time in your classroom under your tutelage where you are their professor. They are going to come out quoting you. They are going to come out believing like you believe.

So if you are a student of Luther, if Luther has an issue with *James*, then guess what? You are going to have an issue with *James*. If Luther has an issue with tongues, guess what? You're going to have an issue with tongues. If Luther has an issue with whatever Luther has an issue with, his followers are going to have issues with the same.

If you are a Baptist student, you are going to think like a Baptist. You are going to read the Bible like a Baptist. You are going to pray like a Baptist. You are going to

preach like a Baptist. You are going to act like one. That is because you have been *indoctrinated*.

James 2:1 – “My brethren, have not the faith of our Lord Yeshua Messiah, *the Lord of glory*, with **respect of persons.**”

We are going to look at *James*. We are going to go through it. This is going to be an expository (if you would); an exposition of *James 2*. *James 2* is filled with so many nuggets. There is so much information, that we can spend quite a bit of time right here.

We talked about the work. The question came up just last Sabbath concerning the respect of persons. James deals with that issue. The word he uses there is *prosopolepteo* meaning: to respect the person (i.e. the external condition of man); to have respect of persons, [basically to] **discriminate**.

What James is doing, is that James is not coming up with something. James is coming from the Torah. We are going to see that when James talks about the law of liberty, he is saying that you will find it in the law. Freedom is in the law. Christians interpret the law of liberty as some law that is liberty without even knowing what law they are even referring to.

“Well, it’s the law of liberty.”

Okay, well where is the law of liberty? Explain the law of liberty. The law of liberty is the Torah. The Torah is freedom. The Torah is liberty. The Torah is freedom. Yeshua came to show us and to set the captives free. How? By taking them away from the traditions of men and calling them back to the Torah of YeHoVaH.

YeHoVaH took a people who were in captivity who had a slave mentality, to bring them into freedom and to give them the law of YeHoVaH that will keep them free.

When they neglected the law of YeHoVaH, what happened? They went back into bondage.

Contrary to popular belief, not being under the law puts you into bondage. *The law is freedom.* Why? Because whom the Son sets free is free indeed. When he came to set the captives free, who did he come to? He came to his own who had been captive – Judaism. They were in bondage to the traditions of men, and to the manmade rules and regulations.

They were under the control of the Rabbis, the religious leaders, the Ravs. Now you have people who want to be under the control of the Rabbis. It's the same mindset. We want a Rabbi. We want a Rabbi. Yeshua says:

“Call no man Rabbi.”

The fact that a person wants a Rabbi, is an indication that they have rejected *the* Rabbi. He says:

“You only have one. Just one.”

Word usage: To judge based on outward appearances. Now where James gets this from is from *Leviticus*. *Leviticus* says:

Lev 19:15 – “Ye shall do no unrighteousness in judgment: thou shalt not **respect the person** of the poor, nor honour the person of the mighty: *but* in righteousness shalt thou judge thy neighbour.”

In other words, every one of you should be judged by the same merit. You shouldn't judge a woman because she's a woman with a different judgment of a man. A lawbreaker is a lawbreaker, regardless of the gender, regardless of the ethnicity and regardless of the economic status. Whether you are a poor lawbreaker or a rich lawbreaker, you are still a lawbreaker.

The Almighty says:

“Don’t respect a person because of their poverty.”

That is because sometimes people have compassion for the underdog. They have compassion for the poor. But if the poor break the law of YeHoVaH, they are going to suffer the same fate as the wealthy. Do you understand? YeHoVaH says:

“Do not do that. Don’t judge based on economic status. Don’t let somebody off because...”

James goes as far as to say:

Jas 2:2 – “For if there come unto your assembly a man...”

Here is where he takes this from *Leviticus* 19, because YeHoVaH says:

“Don’t judge because of a poor person. Don’t respect a poor person. Don’t respect a rich person.”

Lev 19:15 – “...*but* in righteousness shalt thou judge they neighbour.”

You judge the poor person with the same righteousness that you would judge the rich person. Don’t discriminate. James goes as far as to say:

Jas 2:2 – “For if there come unto your assembly a man with a gold ring, in goodly apparel, and there come in also a poor man in vile raiment;”

Now do you see what is going on here? One is going to be treated differently “because.”

Jas 2:3 – “And ye have respect to him that weareth the gay clothing,”

You see, this is when “gay” was popular not the “gay” as we know it today. In other words, they have colorful, wealthy, well to do clothing.

“and say unto him, ‘Sit thou here’ in a good place; and say to the poor, ‘Stand thou there, or sit here under my footstool:’”

Jas 2:4 – “Are ye not then partial...”

Now you are showing partiality.

“...in yourselves, and are become judges of evil thoughts?”

This is where respect of persons comes from. Every one of us starts off at the same place – your relationship with the Almighty and my relationship with the Almighty. When you do what is required of you, within the word itself there are blessings and curses. When you obey the word, you will experience the blessings. When you disobey the word, you will experience the curses.

It’s not that YeHoVaH has favor or lack of favor with you. It is that you are doing what is required to enter into the place of blessings, or neglecting the things that are causing the curses.

It is a righteous judgment. The good news is that if a person is in a place where they have brought curses upon themselves, they can repent. The bad news is that if a person is in a place where they are bringing blessings upon themselves, they can repent. You can say:

“Do you know what? I don’t like all of this favor. Give me some curses!”

Just walk away!

Jas 2:5 – “Hearken my beloved brethren, Hath not God chosen the poor of this world rich in faith, and heirs of the kingdom which he hath promised to them that love him?”

Jas 2:6 – “But ye have despised the poor. Do not rich men oppress you, and draw you before the judgment seats?”

Jas 2:7 – “Do not they blaspheme that worthy name by which ye are called?”

Then James goes off and says something like this. Now “he” is really messing with Luther here.

Jas 2:8 – “If ye fulfil the **royal law** according to the scripture,”

What scripture? He is saying:

“Listen, there is a royal law and the royal law is in the scripture.”

“...Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself, ye do well:”

He tells us what the law is – what the royal law is. Now he is saying that the law has some royalty associated with it. The law of love is *Leviticus* 19:18. It is called the “royal law” because it is the supreme law that is the source of all other laws governing human relationships.

Lev 19:18 – “Thou shalt not avenge, nor bear any grudge against the children of thy people, but thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself: I *am* YeHoVaH.”

This is where that law comes from. People say:

“Brother, if you loved the Lord your God with all of your heart...”

Do you know that is the law? The second one is:

“Love your neighbor as yourself.”

That’s the law! If you are going to keep some aspect of the law and not keep all of it, why even mess with it? A person will even go so far as to say:

“If you break one, you break them all.”

Well, if you keep one, you are supposed to be keeping them all! Make up your mind. Either you are under it, or you are not!

“Well now brother, you are confusing me.”

“No, you are already confused! I’m trying to unconfuse you.”

Mt 22:36 – “Master, which *is* the great commandment in the law?”

Everybody wants to know. His disciples know. Yeshua doesn’t say:

“Well, we’re not under the law. We’re under grace. Don’t worry about it.”

No, he says unto them:

Mt 22:37 – “Yeshua said unto him, ‘Thou shalt love the Lord they Elohim with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind.’”

Mt 22:38 – “This is the first and great commandment.”

Mt 22:39 – “And the second *is* like unto it, Thou shalt love they neighbour as thyself.”

Mt 22:40 – “On these two commandments hang all the law and the prophets.”

How? Now you have people who want to say:

“Well, the first commandment is to love the Lord. The second portion of the Ten Commandments is to love God. That’s all we are responsible for – the ten.”

It’s like:

“You know, that sounds really pretty. It does.”

But that is not what he is saying. James goes as far as to say:

Jas 2:9 – “**But if ye have respect to persons,** ye commit sin,”

Now wait a minute.

“...and are convinced of the law as transgressors.”

So a New Testament person who has respect of persons, has transgressed the law. Why? Because in the law it says that you should not do that.

Jas 2:10 – “For whosoever shall keep the whole law, and yet offend in one *point*, he is guilty of all.”

We’re going to break that down for you. James is not saying:

“Listen. If you break one law, you’ve broken them all, so don’t worry about them. Don’t do any of them. If you don’t do any of them, you have broken them all too.”

But people take it and say:

“See? If you break one, you’ve broken all of them.”

Okay, now what? So what do you do? If you have broken one, you have broken all of them. What are you saying to me? That I don’t have to do any of them? James already said:

“Listen. There is a royal law.”

Do you get it? There’s a royal law, so you have to do something. If you don’t do this, you have transgressed the law. But if you break one, you have broken all of them, and yet you have to keep something in the law.

“But what about grace, brother?”

Grace is “all up in here.” I will leave you with this:

Jas 2:11 – “For he that said, ‘Do not commit adultery,’ said also, ‘Do not kill.’ Now if thou commit no adultery, yet if thou kill, thou art become a transgressor of the law.”

Jas 2:12 – “So speak ye, and so do, as they that shall be judged by the law of liberty.”

James speaks about this law of liberty more than once. We are going to look at this next week. We still have to get to Luther and faith. Hallelujah.