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Colossians 2

I can't tell you how many times I've spoken to someone about the feast days who are quick to refer to Colossians chapter 2 in saying that we no longer have need of them. Then, they quote it from the NIV, which reads it as:

Colossians 2:16-17

Therefore do not let anyone judge you by what you eat or drink, or with regard to a religious festival, a new moon celebration or a Sabbath day. These are a shadow of the things that **were to come**; the reality, however, is found in Christ.

Many, today, use the NIV as their choice of Bible translation. And, though we admit there is no perfect translation, the NIV truly does a horrible job translating these particular verses, namely verse 17 where it says, “were to come.”

The Greek does not say, “were to come,” but rather “that which is lingering.” This is the Greek word “mellonton.” It carries the meaning “to be about to, or to linger.”

The ASV, along with others, actually does a good job in translating it. Verse 17 in the ASV reads:

Colossians 2:17

which are a shadow of the things to come; but the body is Christ's.

This truly changes everything. Seriously. Think about it. One translation says, “were to come,” and the other translation says, “to come.” From past tense to future tense. Big difference. Night and day type of difference.

Many use this verse from the NIV to say, “See? You don't have to let someone judge you because you're not following the Sabbath or the feast days now. Now, it's all about following Christ.” But this verse is actually where Paul is encouraging the believers to not let people judge them because they ARE observing the right day as found in the instructions of the Lord.

To understand this, we must not forget the instructions of Paul just 8 verses before:

Colossians 2:8

See to it that no one takes you captive through hollow and deceptive philosophy, which depends on human tradition and the basic principles of this world rather than on Christ.

He just said, "...rather than on Christ." Who or what is Christ? He was and is the living Word of God. All of it. This includes the Torah. The instructions that the Father has given us.

The instructions of the Lord found in the Torah are not even close to being hollow and deceptive philosophy, which depends on human tradition and the basic principles of this world as Paul refers to here in verse 8.

The context is very clear as to what Paul is opposing, and he is NOT opposing the eternal Word of God. Along those same lines, compare what he says in verses 20-22:

Colossians 2:20-22

Since you died with Christ to the basic principles of this world (note that he doesn't say, "basic principles of God"), why, as though you still belonged to it, do you submit to its rules: "Do not handle! Do not taste! Do not touch!"? These are all destined to perish with use, because they are based on human commands and teachings.

"Human commands and teachings." The Torah is NOT "human commands and teachings." The Torah is the instructions of the Father.

Many study Bibles give the context to what Paul was addressing here in Colossians. It was the Gnostics that came in and started polluting the doctrine of the Colossians. The Gnostics directed the Colossians away from what Paul originally taught and practiced, that being the Law of God; doing Bible things in Bible ways.

They even began imposing severe self-discipline Gnostic beliefs and man-made commands that had to do with bodily sensory pleasures, neglecting the body and the like. (Do not handle, touch, things like that)

The Lord's feast days are a big problem for the Gnostics because these days are all about eating and celebrating. That's why they are called feasts. The Gnostics were in to worshipping angels and pursuing secret knowledge. They hated God's feast days because they thought anything of physical pleasure, including food, was evil.

Thus, it is easily concluded by most that it was the Gnostics who were telling the Colossians to NOT keep the feast days. This is why Paul was saying they should not let themselves be judged for keeping them.

Again, some study Bibles give side notes that expounds on the Gnostics, like that of the Zondervan Life Application Bible.

Paul was railing the whole time against these traditions of man-made beliefs. Paul even states that these are commandments and doctrines originating from men, not God, letting us know that this is not about God's law, but men's religious traditions.

We must understand that the law is not human commands and teachings. The law is God's commands. It's HIS instructions to us in teaching us how to live. Thus, the encouragement of verse 16 is regarding their obedience to that which was established in the law.

Verse 17 doesn't say that these (the feast days), are done away with in Yeshua. It actually shows that they are a foreshadow of the things to come regarding Yeshua. Meaning that they are to be followed as reminders of that which is still yet to happen.

Think about it for a moment. The Spring feast of Passover and First Fruits of Unleavened Bread, along with Pentecost, were holy days that represented the past BUT the reality was actually found in Christ. Thus, meaning that those holy days were prophetically pointing to Yeshua all along. And, NOW they point back to Him as a memorial to all He did.

Thus, here Paul mentions the festivals, the new moon celebration and the Sabbath day as prophetic pointers as well. He's referencing the Fall holy days. These are the Day of Trumpets, the Day of Atonement and the Feast of Tabernacles. The new moon celebration is the Day of Trumpets. The only day given to us, by Yahweh, that falls on a new moon. This represents the day of Yeshua's return.

He also mentions the Sabbath day. So what is the Sabbath day a foreshadow of? This obviously represents the 1,000 years of rest in the millennium. These are to be observed as reminders for us in what is to come. They are not a shadow of things that "were to come" as so many want to say. But rather, they are a shadow of things that are coming.

And so, we continue in pursuing the instructions from the Father knowing that they are pointing us to the coming return of Yeshua.

We hope you've enjoyed this teaching.

Remember, continue to test everything!

Shalom.

For more on this and other teachings, please visit us at www.testeverything.net

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

EMAIL: Info@119ministries.com

FACEBOOK: www.facebook.com/119Ministries

WEBSITE: www.TestEverthing.net & www.ExaminatoTodo.net

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