

Of Grace, Faith, Works, Righteousness and Judgment

Author: Kathy Zahora

The Apostle Paul says we're not under law but under grace¹. What grace is it that is sufficient for us?

For by grace are you saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God: Not of works, so that no one should boast, Eph. 2:8-9.

So, we cannot be justified by our works. We can only be justified by faith, and we can only acquire this faith, by His grace which extends to each of us a measure² of/capacity for faith. Then, why do our works matter, whether they comply with the statutes and ordinances or not?

For we are his workmanship, created in Messiah Yeshua unto good works, which God before ordained that we should walk in them, Eph. 2:10.

Grace, then, is not license to lasciviousness³, God forbid, and works continue to matter⁴. They are, in fact, central to what we were created for. Paul explained to the Ephesians that we are blessed of the Father, being chosen 'in Him' before the foundation of the world, and predestinated unto adoption as children by Yeshua, to the praise of the glory of that grace, His grace, by which He made us accepted in the Beloved; in whom we have redemption through His blood, and forgiveness of sins, according to the riches of that same grace. He made known to us the mystery that in the fullness of times He would gather together in one, all in Messiah, both those in heaven, and those on earth; even 'in Him', by Whom we also obtained an inheritance, that we should be to the praise of his glory, in Whom we were sealed with the Holy Spirit of promise, until the redemption of the purchased possession, unto the praise of His glory⁵.

What gives God Glory that men should praise him? Yeshua taught that good works glorify our Father. Then He spoke of law and of righteousness: that neither law nor prophecy was passing away until all of it, the Torah and the words spoken by the prophets, would be fulfilled. Moreover, He said that our righteousness had to exceed that of the lawyers, i.e. those who merely know the 'law', but don't do the 'law', or the Kingdom would remain beyond reach⁶. Have we read this? Do we know and understand this? So, what are 'good' works? Yeshua instructed us not to labor for, i.e. work for, that which passes away, but for that which endures to everlasting life. When asked, 'What shall we do, that we might work the works of God?' He answered 'This is the work of God, that you believe on him whom He hath sent'⁷. He said 'Believe', so now we are back to faith. And later, some claimed, 'Abraham is our father', to which He replied, 'If ye were Abraham's children, ye would do the works of Abraham'⁸. He said 'Works', so now we are back to works. Neither knowledge of the law alone, nor lineage alone avails; but faith in YHWH and His Word, leads to knowledge with good, acceptable works, and faithfulness to the heritage of the fathers.

What are the works of Abraham? Works of faith that staggered not at the promises of God, and brought forth an heir from one as good as dead...(dead in sin until belief/obedient works were accounted as righteousness); works of obedience that went out when he was called

and sojourned in the land of promise; that when tried, offered up Isaac, believing God was able to raise him up, even from the dead⁹.

Scripture tells us that even Moses kept the Passover by faith¹⁰. Then, as works/observance without faith is dead¹¹ (i.e. works/observance apart from faith in His work* through Messiah, will render no life from the dead), also faith without works is dead¹².

*What are His works?

He hath showed his people the power of his works, that he may give them the heritage of the heathen. The works of his hands are verity and judgment; all his commandments are sure, Ps. 111:6-7.

Thus saith YHWH, the Holy One of Israel, and his Maker, Ask me of things to come concerning my sons, and concerning the work of my hands command me. I have made the earth, and created man upon it: I, even my hands, have stretched out the heavens, and all their host have I commanded. I have raised him up in righteousness, and I will direct all his ways: he shall build my city, and he shall let go my captives, not for price nor reward, saith YHWH of hosts, Isa. 45:11-13.

Thy people also shall be all righteous: they shall inherit the land for ever, the branch of my planting, the work of my hands, that I may be glorified, Isa. 60: 21.

And works of faith are accounted as righteousness¹³; not the ‘legalistic’ expression of works, which renders ‘self’-righteousness, but works by faith in God’s work, promises and power, which render righteousness that is of God and ascribes any glory, derived from praise for the work, to His Name. ‘Law’ was the tutor to reveal the heart condition which, without His Torah written there by His Spirit, can only fall short of God. Efforts to abide that ‘law’, which is written outside the heart, can only be expressions of the flesh and will of man. But, when the Torah is integral to our being¹⁴, is fused into us by the Fire of the Holy Spirit, its outworking, becomes the expression of His Divine Nature resident within us. How can we be the New Creation and deny the Torah written on our hearts? It is with joy that we embrace it, not by natural efforts. The Joy of YHWH, then is our new Strength¹⁵, not the might, nor power of our own resources¹⁶. It was by this Joy that Yeshua endured His crucible of obedience¹⁷. It is no different for those who are ‘in Him’. Having received this new Nature, the Nature of the New Creation/His Nature, it becomes ‘natural’ for us to live by it. We are no longer tutored by the ‘law’, but by the Spirit Whose Nature is the fulfillment of this same ‘law’¹⁸. The testimony of Yeshua is the spirit of prophecy¹⁹, all of which will be fulfilled before one ‘jot or tittle’ passes away from this ‘law’²⁰. The active expression of His Spirit fulfilling the will of the Father through obedient New Creation sons will be seen as His ‘works’.

So, faith alone is no value, and works alone is no value, but faith with good works will avail unto eternal life. Now how will we be judged? Yeshua says:

*For the Father judges no one, but has committed all judgment unto the Son: That all men should honor the Son, even as they honor the Father. He that honors not the Son honors not the Father which has sent him. Verily, verily, I say unto you, **He that hears my word, and believes on him that sent me, has everlasting life, and shall not come into condemnation;** but is passed from death unto life. Verily, verily, I say unto you,*

*the hour is coming, and now is, when the dead shall hear the voice of the Son of God: and they that hear shall live. For as the Father has life in himself; so has he given to the Son to have life in himself; And has given him authority to execute judgment also, because he is the Son of man. Marvel not at this: for the hour is coming, in which **all that are in the graves shall hear his voice, And shall come forth; they that have done good, unto the resurrection of life; and they that have done evil, unto the resurrection of damnation.** I can of mine own self do nothing: as I hear, I judge: and my judgment is just; because I seek not my own will, but the will of the Father which has sent me. If I bear witness of myself, my witness is not true. There is another that bears witness of me; and I know that the witness which he witnesses of me is true. You sent unto John, and he bore witness unto the truth. But I receive not testimony from man: but these things I say, that you might be saved. He was a burning and a shining light: and you were willing for a season to rejoice in his light. But I have greater witness than that of John: for the **works which the Father has given me to finish, the same works that I do, bear witness of me, that the Father has sent me.** And the Father himself, which has sent me, has borne witness of me. You have neither heard his voice at any time, nor seen his shape. And **you have not his word abiding in you: for whom he has sent, him you believe not. Search the scriptures; for in them you think you have eternal life: and they are they which testify of me.** And you will not come to me, that you might have life. John 5:22-40. (emphasis added.)*

Yeshua is saying that we will be judged ‘in him’ according to our works..., were they good works? Were they His works? What works did He do? What remains of the ‘jot and tittle’ to be fulfilled by the Spirit of the Father? We will all be judged, all of us, according to our works, and our works will be judged good or evil by the standard of His works.

And, behold, I come quickly; and my reward is with me, to give every man according as his work shall be. I am Aleph and Tav, the beginning and the end, the first and the last. Blessed are they that do his commandments, that they may have right to the tree of life, and may enter in through the gates into the city, Rev. 22:12-14.

How were the 7 churches judged?

1. Ephesus: *I know your **works** ... Remember therefore from where you are fallen, and repent, and do the first **works**..., Rev. 2:2a & 5a.*
2. Smyrna: *I know your **works**..., Rev. 2:9a.*
3. Pergamum: *I know your **works**..., Rev. 2:13a.*
4. Thyatira: *I know your **works**,.. and your **works**..., ...and I will give unto every one of you according to your **works**. ... And he that overcomes, and keeps My **works** unto the end, to him will I give power over the nations..., Rev. 2:19a, 23b & 26.*
5. Sardis: *...I know your **works**...; ...I have not found your **works** perfect before God. Rev. 3:1 & 2b.*
6. Philadelphia: *I know your **works**..., Rev. 3:8a*
7. Laodicea: *I know your **works**..., Rev. 3:15.*

So works continue, and what/who it is that works, and what the works accomplish will be manifest, as Paul instructs:

Now he that plants and he that waters are one: and every man shall receive his own reward according to his own labor. For we are laborers together with God: you are God's husbandry, you are God's building. According to the grace of God which is given unto me, as a wise masterbuilder, I have laid the foundation, and another builds on it. But let every man take heed how he builds on it. For no one is able to lay any other foundation except that which is laid, which is Yeshua Messiah. Now if any man builds upon this foundation gold, silver, precious stones, wood, hay, stubble; Every man's work shall be made manifest: for the day shall declare it, because it shall be revealed by fire; and the fire shall try every man's work of what sort it is. If any man's work remains which he has built thereupon, he shall receive a reward. If any man's work shall be burned, he shall suffer loss: but he himself shall be saved; yet so as by fire, I Cor. 3:8-15.

What is the foundation of Yeshua Messiah? The Word from the beginning, that was with God, and was God²¹. The Word that ‘changes not’²². Why do good works need to be made manifest? When Philip asked to be shown the Father, Yeshua spoke to him of works, His works, by which Philip had seen the Father, because our works reveal who our Father/father is. Yeshua promised that by belief in Him, greater works would be done, after He would go to the Father²³.

What works, even greater works, remain to be done? The work of the redemption of creation. What qualifies the firstborn to be redeemers? Faithfulness to the statutes and ordinances. Our works will show us faithful firstborn. We must remember the teachings of Moses to accomplish His works. And our only access to the enduement of power to become the sons of God is through His Spirit, which is given to those that believe, for it is by faith through grace. But to what end? Redemption of creation according to the statutes and ordinances, to the praise and glory of God.

End Notes

¹ Rom. 6:14. ² Rom. 12:3. ³ Jude 4. ⁴ Rom. 6:15-19. ⁵ Eph. 1:2-14. ⁶ Matt. 5:16-20. ⁷ John 6:27-29. ⁸ John 8:39. ⁹ Rom. 3:29-5:2, Heb. 11:8-19. ¹⁰ Heb. 11:28. ¹¹ Heb. 7:19. ¹² James 2:14-17.	¹³ Gal. 3:6. ¹⁴ Jer. 31:31-33. ¹⁵ Neh. 8:10. ¹⁶ Zech. 4:6. ¹⁷ Heb. 12:2. ¹⁸ Rom. 8:1-4. ¹⁹ Rev. 19:10. ²⁰ Matt. 5:18. ²¹ John 1:1. ²² Mal. 3:6, Ps. 119:89. ²³ John 14:7-14.
---	---