

## 175 – The benefit of nothing

Last week, a friend shared something with me about a Scripture that I had not known.

**Romans 8:1** in the CLNT, reads, “*Nothing, consequently, is now condemnation to those in The Messiah Yeshua.*” I confess that as often as I’ve read this, and as often as we have seen it over the past 173 Light Up the Scriptures studies, I assumed I knew what it meant. What my friend shared with me last week, however, enlightened my understanding, and I’ve been in awe of it since, and the Father has pointed to it exclusively for our study tonight; so, let’s look at it afresh together.

The revelation my friend shared with me was centered around the first word, “*Nothing.*” Being the good student of Scripture, he found that the transliteration of *Nothing* is “Not-Yet-One,” according to the CLNT-KC, on page 207). It means, “*the absolute negative, no, not, no one, not one, not anyone, not any, not anytime.*” Thayer’s Lexicon on BlueLetterBible.org, adds, “*nothing whatever, not at all, of no importance.*” Thayer points out **Acts 21:24**. Before we read it, let’s get the context. The setting is Paul’s entry into Jerusalem for the last time, which results in his being taken to Rome as a prisoner to appeal to Caesar. The text we’ll read is the instruction to Paul by the Apostles, predominantly James, who had become the chief spokesman. Paul’s reputation by now had spread throughout the unbelieving Jewish community, which was ready to tear Paul apart, because of his evangel and his involvement with the Gentiles, whom he did not compel by religious ritual to be baptized or keep the Law of Moses. Let’s begin at **Acts 21:17**. This is Luke narrating:

*Now at our coming to be in Jerusalem, the brethren welcome us with gratification [that is, with joy and gladness].*

*18 Now by the ensuing day, Paul had been in, together with us, to James. Besides, all the elders came along.*

James, we will recall, had become well-entrenched as the defacto head of the brethren in Jerusalem. Paul and his associates are having an audience with James, to which the others were invited, but the language here indicates that they were of secondary importance at most, including Peter and John. You’ve heard me say before that I believe that James has some answering to do before the Lord for his role, not as one of the original disciples, much less an apostle, but as a usurper of authority – this is my opinion, but I arrived at it simply by reading Luke’s account in Acts, and Paul’s in **Galatians 2:12**, where he says, “*Certain men came from James.*” Galatians is Paul’s first epistle historically, and it’s the only letter in which he refers to James, the Lord’s half-brother, who has obviously assumed an

authoritative role in Jerusalem. James is certainly receiving Paul gladly, to his credit, and respects Paul's unique evangel and calling to the nations.

19 And, greeting them, he [Paul] unfolded, one by one, each of the things which YaHoVeH does among the nations through his dispensation.

20 Now those who hear glorified YaHoVeH. Besides, they said to him, "You are beholding, brother, how many tens of thousands there are among the Jews who have believed, and all are inherently zealous for the law?"

21 Now they were instructed concerning you that you teach all the Jews among the nations apostasy from Moses, telling them not to be circumcising their children, nor yet to be walking in the customs.

22 What is it, then? Undoubtedly a multitude must come together, for they will hear that you have come.

Watch what happens when no one seeks the Lord, like Moses did in the desert, and like Yeshua did when He walked among them. Fear has replaced faith, and for what it's worth, to me Paul's silence is deafening. I believe he knew that he was simply walking out the Father's will for him being in Jerusalem in the first place. Paul is acting much like Yeshua did, allowing others to govern his activities and decide his fate. Paul raises no protest and goes along with the whole prescription we're about to read.

23 This, then, which we are saying to you, do. With us are four men having a vow on them.

24 Taking these along, be purified together with them, and bear their expenses, that they should be shaving their heads, and all will know that what they have been instructed concerning you is **nothing [it is nothing whatever, of no importance]**, but you also are observing the elements and you yourself are maintaining the law.

The Jerusalem brethren's only concern was that Paul be SEEN to be "observing the elements and ... maintaining the law," so that the Jews there could conclude that the accusations of Apostasy against Paul were completely false. Hopefully they'd be satisfied by such a dramatic demonstration as shaving heads and bearing expenses and showing up at the temple in an obvious act of piety. It appears that the entire ecclesia in Jerusalem walked in mortal fear of these religious Jews – perhaps that was because the disciples themselves – or at least the Apostles remaining there – were hiding in their own religiosity.

Now back to **Romans 8:1**:

"Nothing, consequently, is now condemnation to those in The Messiah Yeshua."

I'm going to take the liberty, with the Lord's permission, to rearrange the sentence so that we may understand its meaning and grasp its importance better.

*To those in the Messiah Yeshua, Nothing, consequently, is now condemnation.*

Let's paraphrase it now:

*There isn't any condemnation at all to you – there is not any, not one “damnatory sentence,” (that's what condemnation means), none, not at any time; indeed, the whole idea of condemnation is of no importance at all; and why? Because you are in the Messiah Yeshua. Outside of the Messiah, you're fair game, but IN Him, condemnation simply does not exist; even the concept of it is of no importance whatever.*

In one short sentence, Paul teaches two important principles:

1. Yeshua alone provides the covering to come out from under the cloud of condemnation, which the Law of Moses made visible to the world.
2. Once we are in the Messiah, He brings you *into* Yeshua's covering, removes the fear of a damnatory sentence, which the Law provided and made visible, by erasing all traces of its stain.

Can you see why having an eternal hell makes no sense at all? Where's the redemptive power in that? How is the Messiah's mission accomplished there? How can the Father fulfill the word through Paul in **1 Corinthians 15:28**:

*Now, whenever [the] all may be subjected to Him, then the Son Himself also shall be subjected to Him Who subjects [the] all to Him, that YaHoVeH may be All in all.*

Where is the fulfillment of **Philippians 2:10-11**:

*in the name of Yeshua every knee should be bowing, celestial and terrestrial and subterranean,  
11 and every tongue should be acclaiming that Yeshua the Messiah is Lord, for the glory of God, the Father.*

Clearly, when the Scriptures we just read are fulfilled, the ALL will be in the Messiah, where there is no condemnation – not even the idea of it – and the Father, YaHoVeH Elohim, will be everything in everyone. What will *that* be like, I wonder, when the Father is the *all* in you?

In the meantime, let's receive the truth of Romans 8:1, recognizing that in Yeshua, Whom we know only by faith, by the written accounts of others, and not least by the testimony

of the Spirit of Holiness living in us, you and I have not one shred of condemnation put on us at any time for anything. The truth of **Romans 8:1** is the essence of grace, it seems to me, and early evidence of the greater revelation of **Ephesians 2:4-11**:

YaHoVeH, being rich in mercy, because of His **vast** love with which He loves us  
5 (we also being dead to the offenses and the lusts), vivifies us **[makes us alive]**  
together in the Messiah (in grace are you saved!)  
6 and **rouses** us together and **seats** us together **among** the celestials, **in** the Messiah  
Yeshua,  
7 that, in the oncoming eons, He should be **displaying** the **transcendent riches** of His  
grace in **His kindness to us in the Messiah Yeshua**.  
8 For in grace, through faith, are you saved, and this is not out of you; it is YaHoVeH 's  
approach present,  
9 not of works, lest anyone should be boasting.  
10 For His achievement are we, **being created in the Messiah Yeshua** for good works,  
which the Father makes ready beforehand, that we should be walking in them.

Now come back to verse 7 with me:

that, in the oncoming eons, He should be displaying **the transcendent riches of His  
grace** in **His kindness to us in the Messiah Yeshua**.

The last part is hugely important, given what we've studied so far tonight: "His kindness to us in the Messiah Yeshua." Just like Romans 8, in which Paul teaches that not one bit of condemnation is possible as a result of being in the Messiah, it is also true that the Father's kindness to us is visible IN the Messiah. Our "rousing and seating among the celestials" goes much further than showing off the "transcendent riches" of the Father's grace; being in the Messiah, especially in the eons yet coming, The Father also displays His kindness to us.

Being in the Messiah carries an ultimate price, as we saw in our last study, of total surrender, utter vulnerability, and unequivocal obedience. It also has some serious benefits, doesn't it?

1. **In the Messiah Yeshua, we find no trace or thought of condemnation** – just a quick aside here: we met with someone over the weekend, and I heard Barbara say, probably half a dozen times in the space of 15 minutes, "There is no condemnation here." RIGHT! In the Messiah there CANNOT BE condemnation of any kind whatsoever – not even the thought of it! If there were, then the Father's grace would be neither present nor operative.

You know, it occurs to me that I should add here that the absence of condemnation does not provide license to do as we please; nor does it preclude repentance and correction. Removing condemnation from a son or daughter of YaHoVeH erases the slightest notion of the threat of damnation.

2. **In the Messiah, we are the recipients of the transcendent riches of the Father's grace and kindness**, which He will display in the oncoming eons. What that display may be or what it may look like, I have no clue, but the word "displaying" means "*pointing out, demonstrating, or proving.*" I have the image of a trophy case, which is probably wrong, but at the very least, the *displaying* that Paul wrote about indicates an act of pointing out, demonstrating or proving to those who are present in the oncoming eons, either in the celestials or perhaps even in the terrestrial or earthly realm.
3. **In the Messiah, our spirits, minds, and even our bodies are delivered from the Adamic, dying condition .**

**Romans 3:24**

*Being justified gratuitously in His grace, through the deliverance which is in the Messiah Yeshua.*

4. **In the Messiah, we are living to YaHoVeH.** This position also allows us to be reckoning ourselves to be dead to the Sin

**Romans 6:11**

*Thus you also, be reckoning yourselves to be dead, indeed, to [the] Sin, yet living to YaHoVeH in the Messiah Yeshua, our Lord.*

5. **In the Messiah, we receive life for the eons.**

**Romans 6:23**

*For the ration of Sin is death, yet the gracious gift of YaHoVeH is life eonian, in the Messiah Yeshua, our Lord.*

If you find yourself wondering what happens to life beyond the eons, because they do end – there is a consummation, Paul wrote in 1 Corinthians 15 – you'll have to continue wondering until we meet the Lord, because there is no discussion in the Scriptures about anything beyond the eons. Once the Father is All in all, it's up for grabs, but there's a whole lot to do and a whole lot of time before that day.

6. **In the Messiah, we enjoy the Spirit's law of life, and we're freed from the law of sin and death.**

**Romans 8:2**

for *the spirit's law of life in the Messiah Yeshua frees you from the law of sin and death.*

The idea of a “law of life” may seem a bit odd, but think of it as a guarantee of life. Freedom from sin's law and death's law is no guarantee that we *won't* sin; only that we don't have to – we aren't bound to sin; rather, we are bound to life. Praise the Lord!

7. **In the Messiah, we experience the inseparable love of YaHoVeH.**

**Romans 8:39**

*For I am persuaded that neither death nor life, nor messengers, nor sovereignties, nor the present, nor what is impending, nor powers, 39 nor height, nor depth, nor any other creation, will be able to separate us from the love of YaHoVeH in the Messiah Yeshua, our Lord.*

8. **In the Messiah, we hear the truth and we can speak the truth.**

**Romans 9:1**

*The truth am I telling in the Messiah, I am not lying, my conscience testifying together with me in holy spirit*

As far as I am aware, this statement is true of our studies each week as we *Light Up the Scriptures*. When we talk with one another, and when we talk with others outside our fellowship, I pray we are always *speaking the truth in the Messiah, our consciences testifying together with us in holy spirit*.

9. **In the Messiah, we are one body.**

**Romans 12:5**

*thus we, who are many, are one body in the Messiah, yet individually members of one another.*

We have had so much to do with one another's lives in this ecclesia, I believe, because we are, as Paul wrote, “*members of one another.*” We can run from one another, or try to hide, but as we've seen, the Father always shows, and we are accountable to one another for correction, building up, and, thankfully, encouragement.

10. **In the Messiah, we have reason to be proud of what we do that is toward the Father.**

**Romans 15:17-19**

I have, then, a **boast in the Messiah Yeshua**, in that which is toward YaHoVeH.  
18 For I am not daring to speak any of what the Messiah does not effect through me for the obedience of the nations, in word and work,  
19 in the power of signs and miracles, in the power of YaHoVeH 's spirit, so that, from Jerusalem and around unto Illyricum, I have completed the evangel of the Messiah.

**1 Corinthians 1:31**

He who is boasting, **in the Lord let him be boasting.**

11. **In the Messiah, we have fellow workers and even prisoners, and others who are “approved,” “beloved,” “attested,” “toiling,” and “chosen” in the Messiah.**

**Romans 16:3, 7-10**

Greet Prisca and Aquila, my **fellow workers in the Messiah Yeshua**  
4 (who, for the sake of my soul, jeopardize their own necks, whom not only I am thanking, but all the ecclesias of the nations also)  
5 and the ecclesia at their house. Greet Epanetus, my beloved, who is the firstfruit of the province of Asia for the Messiah.  
6 Greet Mary, who toils much for you.  
7 Greet Andronicus and Junias, my relatives and my fellow captives who are notable among the apostles, who also came to be in the Messiah before me.  
8 Greet Ampliatos, my **beloved in the Lord.**  
9 Greet Urbanus, our **fellow worker in the Messiah**, and Stachys, my beloved.  
10 Greet Apelles, **attested in the Messiah.** Greet those who are of Aristobulus.  
11 Greet Herodion, my relative. Greet those of Narcissus who **are in the Lord.**  
12 Greet Tryphena and Tryphosa, who are **toiling in the Lord.** Greet Persis, the beloved, who **toils much in the Lord.**  
13 Greet Rufus, **chosen in the Lord**, and his mother and mine.

12. **In the Messiah, we are hallowed (“holy-ized”).**

**1 Corinthians 1:1-2**

Paul, a called apostle of the Messiah Yeshua, through the will of YaHoVeH, and Sosthenes, a brother,  
2 to the ecclesia of YaHoVeH which is in Corinth, **hallowed in the Messiah Yeshua**, called saints

We've gone through 12 of these references to the phrase, "in the Messiah Yeshua," and it's obvious that the status of being "in the Messiah Yeshua" is a far superior position than any other. The only reason I can think of to reject His Lordship is because the character He seems to inhabit when He is preached about or taught of in Christian churches is nonsensical or outright offensive. I understand that the evangel itself IS an offense, but the Lord need not be. Indeed, I believe that the evangel is only an offense because it requires the faith of a child to believe it, and old humanity is enamored with its skills of perception and reason, however foolish they are to the Father. The only reason that Yeshua is seen as offensive is, I believe, because He is misrepresented, along with the Father and His purpose, in a poorly translated and therefore, misunderstood, and misapplied Bible.

**13. In the Messiah, we become to others wisdom from the Father, righteousness, holiness, and deliverance.**

**1 Corinthians 1:30**

*Yet you, [out] of Him [the Father], are in the Messiah Yeshua, Who became to us wisdom from YaHoVeH, besides righteousness and holiness and deliverance.*

**14. In the Messiah, we know those who are infants in Him.**

**1 Corinthians 3:1**

*And I, brethren, could not speak to you as to spiritual, but as to fleshly, as to **minors in the Messiah.***

*2 Milk I give you to drink, not solid food, for not as yet were you able. Nay, still, not even now are you able,*

*3 for you are still fleshly.*

When I found this text, I thought, "There's a landmark to know how well you're progressing in your walk with the Lord: Can others, especially ones in position in the Messiah speak to you as fleshly – as infants – or as mature. Can you handle more than the rudiments of the evangel? Can you grasp the secrets of the evangel?"