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Pleroo the Law

In a discussion pertaining to the law of God, sometimes you might hear such a response, *“Jesus fulfilled the whole law of God so I don’t have to.”* Anyone should be rather concerned to hear such a statement. Why? Because that statement implies that it could possibly be a good thing to not have to do the law of God.

Of course, anyone saying such a thing is not stopping to consider that is the very same thought and mentality that the nation of Israel constantly found itself and that never turned out well.

Are we to believe that our Father punished Israel for not wanting to love the Father by obeying the law of God, that He sent His Son to die for Israel so that they did not have to do the law of God? That would be rather awkward.

“...But Jesus fulfilled the whole law of God so I don’t have to.” This statement clearly makes the mistake of not realizing that it is a blessing to keep a law of God. There are many places we could point to in the Bible just to prove this. But Psalm 119 is a great start from our perspective. Paul also teaches in Romans 8 that it’s the fleshly minded that think this way, but those who are spiritual love the law of God.

Romans 8:7

“because the mind set on the flesh is hostile toward God; for it does not subject itself to the law of God, for it is not even able to do so.”

So, what if someone implies to us that it is a good thing that the law of God was removed by our Messiah? So, what are we to do with such a response from professed believers? Sometimes Matthew 5 is cited in this belief.

The word *“fulfilled”* and Matthew 5:17 are either interpreted as being fulfilled in the sense of fully preaching or teaching the law of God, or fulfilled in the sense of no longer making the law of God applicable. Those are our choices.

We would recommend consulting a Thayer’s Lexicon or Strong’s Exhaustive Concordance to assist with

defining the Greek words used here.

Matthew 5:17

“Do not think that I came to destroy the law or the prophets. I did not come to destroy, but to fulfill.”

Interpreting fulfill as meaning that the law is no longer applicable makes absolutely no sense in light of the next two verses in which it is stated nothing will change until heaven and earth disappear. Then, Jesus, His Hebrew name being Yeshua, even goes on listing consequences if anyone practices and teaches even the least of the commandments are no longer applicable.

Matthew 5:18-19

For assuredly, I say to you, till heaven and earth pass away, one jot or one tittle will by no means pass from the law till all is fulfilled. Whoever, therefore, breaks one of the least of these commandments, and teaches men so, shall be called least in the kingdom of heaven; but whoever does and teaches them, he shall be called great in the kingdom of heaven.

So, if we choose for the word “fulfill” in verse 17 to mean that the whole law of God is no longer going to be applicable to believers, here’s what we have Yeshua saying:

In verse 17, “I come not to destroy the law but to make it no longer applicable.”

Verse 18, “but until heaven and earth pass, every jot or tittle of the law still stands.”

Verse 19, “Even though the law of God is no longer going to be applicable as stated in verse 17, anyone teaching that the whole law of God is no longer applicable will be least in the kingdom.”

That definition of fulfill in verse 17 just doesn’t seem to work in any way possible. This means that “*fulfilled*” in Matthew 5:17, the Greek word “*pleroo*,” must mean to fully preach or fully teach the law of God and cannot teach that any part of the law of God is no longer applicable because it would then render verses 18 and 19 as irrelevant or even contradictory.

Obviously Yeshua did not say in verse 17 that He intends to fulfill the whole law of God that it is no longer applicable and then immediately proceed to tell us that it is applicable to us, at least until heaven and earth pass away.

And then, as if that was not enough, then proceed in the very next verse to say that there are eternal consequences to the believer for teaching and practicing that even the least of the Commandments are no longer applicable. That would make either Yeshua schizophrenic or insane.

How could the law of God be removed and not be removed at the same time? And, if the law of God was removed by Him fulfilling it, then why would there be negative consequences that would result if someone teaches and practices that some of the commandments no longer apply?

Obviously, that does not make sense, so the answer is clear.

This is about as easy as it gets, despite what one might believe about Paul and we already know that Peter said that Paul is perhaps the most difficult teacher to understand as it relates to matters of God’s law. Yet, how many want to run to his writings thinking they understand Paul taught the whole law of

God is no longer applicable?

Meaning this, Yeshua did not come to destroy the law or make it no longer applicable. Instead, He came to fully teach us the law of God. This should make much more sense considering the fact that Yeshua spent His whole ministry teaching and practicing what Moses already wrote as the Father's Word.

Even teaching in Mark chapter 7 that nullifying what Moses wrote is a very bad thing to do. But let's suppose we ignore all that and that verses 18 and 19 of Matthew 5 no longer exist. How else would we know that it does not make much sense to believe that when Yeshua said in Matthew 5 that He came to fulfill the whole law of God in the sense that He did not mean that we no longer have to do it anymore?

Well, one clear reason beyond all the context that we have already offered is the fact that Yeshua did not do the whole law of God. And, He never will.

Yeshua did not fulfill the whole law of God in the sense of actually doing the whole law of God. That is not possible. There are commandments that are only for women. And Yeshua, He will never do those. There are commandments that are only for farmers, and Yeshua was not a farmer. There are commandments for the judges, the Sanhedrin, and Yeshua is not part of them. There are commandments for the Levites, and Yeshua was not a Levite, and we could go on and on.

So, now we know that Yeshua did not come to fulfill the whole law of God by doing the whole law of God so that we don't have to. Yeshua did not do the whole law of God and He never will.

Let's say that again. Yeshua did not do the whole law of God and He never will.

The only thing "fulfill" can mean in Matthew 5:17 is that He came to fully teach the whole Word of God as truth. This is the exact same word used in Matthew chapter 3.

Matthew 3:15

"But Jesus (Yeshua) answered and said to him permit it to be so now for thus it is fitting for us to fulfill all righteousness."

So, if Matthew 5:17 means that Yeshua fulfilled the whole law of God so that we do not have to, does that mean that Yeshua also fulfill practicing all righteousness so that we no longer have to practice righteousness? Obviously not.

1 John 2:29

"If you know that He is righteous, you know that everyone who practices righteousness is born of Him."

1 John 3:7

"Little children, let no one deceive you. He who practices righteousness is righteous just as He is righteous."

1 John 3:10

"In this the children of God and the children of the devil are manifest. Whoever does not practice righteousness is not of God nor is he who does not love his brother."

So, how does Strong's concordance define the Greek word for righteousness?

Strong's G1345: "and that which has been deemed right as to have force of law. What has been established and ordained by law, an ordinance."

Practicing righteousness means practicing the law of God. Thus, "fulfill" in Matthew 3:15 must mean that Yeshua is teaching righteousness by fulfilling it, not making practicing righteousness no longer applicable.

Let's go back to Matthew 5:17.

Matthew 5:17

"Do not think that I came to destroy the law or prophets. I did not come to destroy but to fulfill (*pleroo*)."

The word "pleroo" is the Greek word translated as "fulfill." Examine this usage of the word "pleroo" by Paul.

Romans 15:19

"...in mighty signs and wonders by the power of the Spirit of God so that from Jerusalem and round about to Illyricum I have **fully preached** (*pleroo*) the gospel of Christ."

Do you see how the word *pleroo* means to fully preach? Another example.

Colossians 1:25 (NASB)

Of this church I was made a minister according to the stewardship from God bestowed on me for your benefit, so that I might **fully carry out the preaching** (*pleroo*) of the word of God...

In Colossians 1:25 we see how the NASB rightfully interprets *pleroo* to "fully carry out the preaching of the Word of God?"

In Matthew 5:17 we discover that Yeshua came to fully preach the law of God and, thus, not destroy it.

Matthew 5:17

"Do not think that I came to destroy the law or prophets. I did not come to destroy but to fulfill (*pleroo*)."

...or more accurately... "to fully carry out the preaching of the Word of God."

And now when Yeshua takes what He said in verse 17 and expounds on that statement in verses 18 and 19, we should see how much more sense it makes with such an understanding of the Greek word *pleroo*.

Matthew 5:18-19

For assuredly, I say to you, till heaven and earth pass away, one jot or one tittle will by no means pass from the law till all is fulfilled. Whoever therefore breaks one of the least of these commandments and teaches men so, shall be called least in the kingdom of heaven; but whoever does and teaches them, he shall be called great in the kingdom of heaven.

And if that is what He came to teach and practice, should we not be teaching all nations to obey and practice everything He taught and practiced?

Matthew 28:19-20

Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit. Teaching them to observe all things that I have commanded you: and lo, I am with you always, even to the end of the age.

Perhaps we should be teaching all nations to obey everything Yeshua taught and practiced.

We hope that this teaching has blessed you, and 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.

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