

## The Nature of Yeshua in the Pauline Epistles and Hebrews

was not a cause for disappointment, for the shape and timing of the entire project of faith are under God's direction."<sup>48</sup>

The One described in 1 Timothy 6:15b "is the blessed and only Sovereign, the King of kings and Lord of lords." Is this referring to Yeshua the Messiah, or just God the Father? What kind of claims are being made of God here? Yeshua is specifically designated as King of Kings and Lord of Lords elsewhere (Revelation 17:14; 19:16; cf. Deuteronomy 10:17; Psalm 136:2-3). It would seem that once again (1 Timothy 1:17) the language of the claims, or even the creedal statement being asserted, is so tightly packed together **that it is difficult to separate out the Father and the Son**. The Son is the One who has made the Father truly known to limited humanity (John 1:18; cf. Job 42:1-6). 1 Timothy 6:14-16, when recognized to incorporate the Lord Yeshua the Messiah, places the Son on a level of no mere supernatural agent of the Father, but that of an entity which is an integral part of the Divine Identity.

The doxology ends with the declaration that God is One "who alone is immortal and who lives in unapproachable light, whom no one has seen or can see. To him be honor and might forever. Amen" (1 Timothy 6:16, TNIV). What this attestation about God is intended to do—**including both the Father and Son**—more than anything else, is to reveal the mortality and sinfulness of fallen humanity, which is clearly hopeless without Him. Knight confirms, "Paul is reflecting the OT truth that God is so holy that sinful mankind cannot see God and live,"<sup>49</sup> just as the Lord had told Moses, "You cannot see My face, for no man can see Me and live!" (Exodus 33:20).<sup>50</sup> The Creator being depicted as unapproachable light, a consuming fire, or just sheer holiness is seen in the Tanach (Exodus 24:17; 1 Kings 8:11; Psalm 104:2), most notably depicted in the theophanies around the throne of God witnessed in Isaiah 6 and Ezekiel 1. One might also legitimately consider the Daniel 7:9-14 theophany of the Son of Man. And as it is testified of Yeshua the Messiah, "No one has seen God at any time; the only begotten God [*monogenēs Theos*, μονογενής θεός] who is in the bosom of the Father {Yeshua}, He has explained *Him*" (John 1:18).

## 2 Timothy 1:1-2 "Opening Greetings"

**"Paul, an apostle of Messiah Yeshua by the will of God, according to the promise of life in Messiah Yeshua, to Timothy, my beloved son: Grace, mercy and peace from God the Father and Messiah Yeshua our Lord."**

The second correspondence composed by the beloved Apostle Paul,<sup>51</sup> to his dear friend and ministry colleague Timothy, is introduced with an assertion about who he is and how the Lord has chosen him: "Paul, an emissary of Messiah *Yeshua* through the will of God, according to the promise of life in Messiah *Yeshua*" (2 Timothy 1:1, TLV). The principal recipient of 2 Timothy is Paul's dear friend and ministry colleague Timothy, as is stated in 2 Timothy 1:2: "To Timothy, my dear son: Grace, mercy and peace from God the Father and Christ Jesus our Lord" (NIV). The contents of this epistle, of course, would eventually be heard by the Ephesian Believers (2 Timothy 2:18; 4:22). Just like the opening of Paul's first correspondence to Timothy (1 Timothy

---

<sup>48</sup> Towner, 419.

<sup>49</sup> Knight, 270.

<sup>50</sup> The term Paul employs for "unapproachable" in v. 16, *aprositos* (ἀπρόσιτος), is similarly used by Philo in describing Moses' ascension of Mount Sinai:

"[H]aving gone up into the loftiest and most sacred mountain in that district in accordance with the divine commands, a mountain which was very difficult of access [*aprositos*] and very hard to ascend" (*On the Life of Moses* 2.70; *The Works of Philo: Complete and Unabridged*, 497).

<sup>51</sup> This entry has been adapted from the author's commentary *The Pastoral Epistles for the Practical Messianic*.

1:2), Timothy is not only issued grace and peace, but also mercy, possibly being a reminder that he needs to expel some mercy in his dealings with the Ephesians. As is typical with the introduction to most of his letters, God is recognized as “Father” and Yeshua is recognized as “Lord,” as Paul definitely does consider Yeshua the Son to be integrated into the Godhead.

## Titus 1:1-4

### “Opening Greetings”

**“Paul, a bond-servant of God and an apostle of Yeshua the Messiah, for the faith of those chosen of God and the knowledge of the truth which is according to godliness, in the hope of eternal life, which God, who cannot lie, promised long ages ago, but at the proper time manifested, even His word, in the proclamation with which I was entrusted according to the commandment of God our Savior, to Titus, my true child in a common faith: Grace and peace from God the Father and Messiah Yeshua our Savior.”**

Paul’s letter to Titus includes some significant ascriptions to both God the Father and Yeshua the Messiah, which bear importance on evaluating whether the Apostle considered Yeshua to be a supernatural but created agent of God, or genuinely integrated into the Divine Identity.<sup>52</sup> Paul introduces his letter to Titus with the statement, “Paul, a servant of God, and an apostle of Messiah Yeshua, according to the faith of God’s elect, and the knowledge of the truth which is according to godliness” (Titus 1:1, PME). Paul labels himself as *doulos Theou, apostolos de Iēsou Christou* (δούλος θεοῦ, ἀπόστολος δὲ Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ), as his service and apostleship involve the activity of both the Father and the Son. Paul’s ministry is one which activity declares “the hope of eternal life that God, who never lies, promised before the ages began” (Titus 1:2, NRSV).

Such a hope is further described by Paul as being something how “in His own time He made His message known, through a proclamation with which I was entrusted, by the command of God our Savior” (Titus 1:3, TLV). The *kairois idiois* (καιροῖς ἰδίους) or “appointed season” (TNIV) is also used in 1 Timothy 6:15 to describe the future arrival of Yeshua the Messiah at His Second Coming, although in Titus 1:3 it is employed to detail the manifestation of the good news and the proclamation of it via servants like Paul. The manifestation of such good news occurred at a specific time or right time, not just some time in general (Grk. *chronos, χρόνος*). While Paul has stated that Abraham had the good news proclaimed to him (Galatians 3:8), no one can argue against how it is only with the arrival of Yeshua onto the scene via His sacrifice and resurrection that the gospel message can now be fully understood in all (or at least most) of its respects (Romans 16:25-26; Colossians 1:25-26).

There are some significant questions posed in the opening statements of Paul’s letter to Titus, in Titus 1:3b-4:

“[B]y the command of God our Savior. To Titus, a true child of our common faith: Grace and *shalom* from God the Father and Messiah *Yeshua*, our Savior!” (TLV).

In Titus 1:3 a reference is made to *tou sōtēros hēmōn Theou* (τοῦ σωτήρος ἡμῶν θεοῦ) or “God our Savior,” and in Titus 1:4 a reference is made to *Christou Iēsou tou sōtēros hēmōn* (Χριστοῦ Ἰησοῦ τοῦ σωτήρος ἡμῶν) or “Messiah Yeshua our Savior.” God, meaning of course the Father, is referred to as Savior (Grk. *sōtēr, σωτήρ*) in Titus 1:3 and elsewhere in the Pastoral Epistles (1 Timothy 1:1; 2:3; 4:10; Titus 2:10; 3:4), **and** Yeshua the Messiah is also referred to as Savior in Titus 1:4 and elsewhere in the Pastoral Epistles (2 Timothy 1:10; Titus 2:13; 3:6). Seeing this, it is very difficult to argue that Yeshua being “Savior” is just akin to His being the Father’s agent of

<sup>52</sup> This entry has been adapted from the author’s commentary *The Pastoral Epistles for the Practical Messianic*.