

without sin' (Heb. 4:15; cf. Luke 4:1-2). While Jesus experienced every kind of human temptation, he never succumbed to sin (John 8:29, 46; 15:10; 2 Cor. 5:21; Heb. 7:26; 1 Pet. 2:22; 1 John 3:5)."⁷

James 2:1 "Our Glorious Lord Yeshua"

"My brethren, do not hold your faith in our glorious Lord Yeshua the Messiah with an attitude of personal favoritism."

In his epistle, James the Just emphasizes the fact that born again Believers are to have faith in Yeshua the Messiah, demonstrating proper actions and attitudes, particularly in their treatment of the poor (James 2:2-7). He admonishes, "My brothers and sisters, do not hold the faith of our glorious Lord *Yeshua* the Messiah while showing favoritism" (James 2:1, TLV). Apparently, for a sector of James' audience, showing "snobbery" (Phillips New Testament) was an extreme problem, and it was disruptive for others trying to enter in. The CJB/CJSB offers the unique rendering for James 2:1, "My brothers, practice the faith of our Lord Yeshua, the glorious Messiah, without showing favoritism."

The object of faith and trust is *tou Kuriou hēmōn Iēsou Christou tēs doxēs* (τοῦ κυρίου ἡμῶν Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ τῆς δόξης), "our glorious Lord Yeshua the Messiah." Associating Yeshua with the description of *doxa* (δόξα), the Greek Septuagint equivalent of the Hebrew *kavod* (כְּבוֹד), is Christologically important. *Kavod* appears in some critical Torah passages describing the Divine presence of God:

"The glory of the LORD [*kevod-ADONAI*, כְּבוֹד יְהוָה] rested on Mount Sinai, and the cloud covered it for six days; and on the seventh day He called to Moses from the midst of the cloud" (Exodus 24:16).

"Then Moses said, 'I pray You, show me Your glory [*kevodekha*, כְּבוֹדְךָ]'" (Exodus 33:18).

"Then the cloud covered the tent of meeting, and the glory of the LORD [*kevod ADONAI*, יְהוָה כְּבוֹד] filled the tabernacle" (Exodus 40:34).

The term *kavod* literally means "heavy," and it has a wide variety of connotations. The most significant of these predominantly regards the presence of God manifested in the Tabernacle in the wilderness. *TWOT* describes the significance of the word *kavod*:

"The bulk of occurrences where God's glory is a visible manifestation have to do with the tabernacle (Ex 16:10; 40:34; etc.) and with the temple in Ezekiel's vision of the exile and restoration (9:3; etc.). These manifestations are directly related to God's self-disclosure and his intent to dwell with men, to have his reality and his splendor known to them. But this is only possible when they take account of the stunning quality of his holiness and set out in faith and obedience to let that character be manifested in them (Num 14:10; Isa 6:3; Ezr 10, 11)."⁸

When James uses the Greek term *doxa*, *doxa* carries with it the same understanding of *kavod*. While *doxa* is a title of honor to be sure, much more than just appropriate honor and reverence to be issued toward Yeshua was intended. McCartney's brief estimation is, "In calling Jesus

⁷ Erik Thoennes, "Biblical Doctrine: An Overview," in Wayne Grudem, ed., *ESV Study Bible* (Wheaton, IL: Crossway, 2008), 2517.

⁸ John N. Oswalt, "כְּבוֹד," in R. Laird Harris, Gleason L. Archer, Jr., and Bruce K. Waltke, eds., *Theological Wordbook of the Old Testament*, 2 vols. (Chicago: Moody Press, 1980), 1:427.

The Nature of Yeshua in the General Epistles

‘glorious Lord,’ James effectively ascribes the divine attributes and importance to Christ.”⁹ Peter Davids offers a much fuller thought on the title *doxa* ascribed to Yeshua, detailing how “this is not simply to say that ‘our Lord’ is most honorable or exalted, for to one who knew the LXX the term would immediately recall the OT use of δόξα [*doxa*] to translate the Hebrew *kābôd* [כְּבוֹד], characteristically meaning, ‘the luminous manifestation of God’s person’ particularly in bringing salvation to Israel (Ex. 14:17-18; Psa. 96:3; Isa. 60:1-2; Ezk. 39:21-22; Zc. 2:5-11...). Thus it is a term of exaltation, revelation, and eschatological salvation.”¹⁰ James 2:1 is not the only place where *doxa* is applied to Yeshua the Messiah (cf. Titus 2:13).

James 2:19

“The Demons Believe God is One”

“You believe that God is one. You do well; the demons also believe, and shudder.”

Within his epistle, James is quite serious about the faith of his audience being demonstrated in action by appropriate works (James 2:14-18). To really hammer hard this point, he informs them, “You believe that God is one; you do well. Even the demons believe -- and shudder” (James 2:19, RSV). The statement “God is one” (*eis estin ho Theos*, εἷς ἐστὶν ὁ θεός) is taken directly from the *Shema* of Deuteronomy 6:4: “Hear, O Israel! The LORD is our God, the LORD is one!”; *Shema Yisrael, ADONAI Eloheinu, ADONAI echad* (שְׁמַע יִשְׂרָאֵל יְהוָה אֱלֹהֵינוּ יְהוָה אֶחָד). The *Shema*, for both ancient Judaism and modern Judaism, remains something repeated multiple times, every day, in traditional prayers (and is also present in many traditional liturgies of many Christian sects). And, the *Shema* definitely served as a part of the Messianic understanding of God in the Apostolic Scriptures (i.e., 1 Corinthians 8:4-6). Aside from the different dynamics regarding the *Shema* and the co-existence of the Father and Son in the Godhead (see previous discussion in Volume I on **Deuteronomy 6:4-5**), the *Shema* is principally a declaration on the supremacy of the God of Israel in the lives of His people. Those who declare that He is the God of Creation, are bidden to Him exclusively.

James observes on the fact that the forces of Satan also believe in this same God, and they shudder. Demons can recognize who God is, and they acknowledge His existence, likely having a far more tangible understanding of His supernatural reality than most mortals do. But simply because demons may acknowledge God, it can do nothing for them, except instill a high level of fear into them, as their eternal damnation is secure. Davids comments to this regard, on how “the NT knows of the monotheism of demons (Mk. 1:24; 5:7; Acts 16:17; 19:15) and their fear before Christ, whom they recognize (Mk. 1:23, 24; 5:7). The point is that their knowledge of who God is does not save them; in fact, it is this very knowledge of which makes them shudder...A faith which cannot go beyond this level is worse than useless.”¹¹

Are those who have a defective faith, and may believe that only a mental ascent of God, and then a selective obedience to Him is all that is necessary—not that much better off than the demons? Moo indicates, “James might be implying, as demons, knowing something of the true God, yet lacking true faith, shudder in fear of judgment, so also ought people whose verbal profession is not followed up with actions.”¹² An acknowledgment of God’s existence and primacy is not enough; James’ point is that the demons know that God is primary, but that is certainly not going to provide them with salvation as eternally condemned creatures. Those

⁹ McCartney, 137.

¹⁰ Peter Davids, *New International Greek Testament Commentary: The Epistle of James* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1982), 107.

¹¹ *Ibid.*, 126.

¹² Moo, *James*, 131.