

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.⁵² 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

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

The Nature of Yeshua in the Pauline Epistles and Hebrews

salvation, and with the Messiah being a largely human figure or even a highly ranked supernatural figure. In Isaiah 45:21 we see that God alone is Savior and there is no other: “there is no other God besides Me, a righteous God and a Savior; there is none except Me.”

Marshall & Towner observe how “Behind the NT usage [of *sōtēr*] lies that of the OT/LXX in which God is designated some thirty times as the deliverer of his people from dangers and the bestower of benefits.”⁵³ In a passage like Isaiah 45:21, the Hifil (casual action, active voice) participle *moshiya* (מוֹשִׁיעַ) is derived from the main verb *yasha* (יָשָׁע), the same root for the Messiah’s Hebrew name *Yeshua* (יֵשׁוּעַ), and rendered as *sōtēr* in the Septuagint. Given the quotation of Isaiah 45:23, “that to Me every knee will bow, every tongue will swear *allegiance*,” in Philippians 2:10 where “at the name of Yeshua EVERY KNEE WILL BOW,” it is down near impossible to argue against Yeshua the Messiah being God, as much as He is also Savior (discussed previously). Fee concludes, “The interchanging of this title between God and Christ Jesus (cf. 3:4, 6) reflects the high Christology found in Paul from the beginning.”⁵⁴ D. Guthrie also states, “The apostle evidently used [this title] indiscriminately of Father and Son.”⁵⁵

Recognizing how both the Father (Titus 1:3) and Son (Titus 1:4) function together as Savior, some further observations need to be made from Titus 1:4, as Paul issues Titus “Grace and peace from God the Father and Messiah Yeshua our Savior,” *apo Theou patros kai Christou Iēsou tou sōtēros hēmōn* (ἀπὸ θεοῦ πατρὸς καὶ Χριστοῦ Ἰησοῦ τοῦ σωτῆρος ἡμῶν) Looking at the grammar here, Mounce asserts “The single preposition ἀπὸ [*apo*], ‘from,’ governs both θεοῦ [*Theou*], ‘God,’ and Χριστοῦ [*Christou*], ‘Christ,’ and is common in Paul’s writings, attesting to his high Christology.”⁵⁶ **Here, there should be no doubting that Paul considers Yeshua to be integrated into the Divine Identity as Savior.** Later in Titus 2:13 he will actually speak of “the appearing of the glory of our great God and Savior, Messiah Yeshua.”

Titus 2:11-14 “God the Savior”

“For the grace of God has appeared, bringing salvation to all men, instructing us to deny ungodliness and worldly desires and to live sensibly, righteously and godly in the present age, looking for the blessed hope and the appearing of the glory of our great God and Savior, Messiah Yeshua, who gave Himself for us to redeem us from every lawless deed, and to purify for Himself a people for His own possession, zealous for good deeds.”

With some instructions having been delivered to Titus to direct to the Cretan Believers about proper behavior (Titus 2:1-10), a strong theological and salvation historical reason is provided by Paul for living uprightly: “For the grace of God has appeared, bringing salvation for all people” (Titus 2:11, ESV).⁵⁷ Towner indicates that this “is a densely packed statement of theology that in some ways marks the rhetorical high point of the letter.”⁵⁸ Titus 1:11 is partially paralleled by 1 John 1:1, which asserts, “What was from the beginning, what we have heard, what we have seen with our eyes, what we have looked at and touched with our hands, concerning the Word of Life.” Mounce also informs us that for Titus 2:11, “the language is decidedly Hellenistic because Paul is contrasting the appearance of the true savior with

⁵³ Ibid., 131.

Included among their references are: Deuteronomy 32:15; Psalm 24:5; 25:5; 28:8; 42:6; Isaiah 12:2; 17:10; 43:3; 60:16.

⁵⁴ Fee, *1 and 2 Timothy, Titus*, 170.

⁵⁵ Guthrie, *Pastoral Epistles*, 195.

⁵⁶ Mounce, 382.

⁵⁷ This entry has been adapted from the author’s commentary *The Pastoral Epistles for the Practical Messianic*.

⁵⁸ Towner, 740.