

Titus 1:14

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

Not giving heed to Jewish fables, and commandments of men,
that turn from the truth.

Analysis

Not giving heed to Jewish fables (μὴ προσέχοντες Ἰουδαϊκοῖς μύθοις, mē prosechontes Ioudaikois mythois)—μῦθος (mythos, myth/fable/fabrication) appears five times in the Pastorals, always negatively. These aren't Old Testament truth but rabbinic additions—midrashic speculation, genealogical minutiae, and halakhic traditions elevating human tradition over Scripture. Compare Jesus's rebuke: "making void the word of God by your tradition" (Mark 7:13).

And commandments of men, that turn from the truth—έντολαις ἀνθρώπων (entolais anthrōpōn, human commandments) echoes Isaiah 29:13 (quoted by Jesus in Mark 7:6-8). Those ἀποστρεφομένων τὴν ἀλήθειαν (apostrephomenon tēn alētheian, turning away from truth) substitute human invention for divine revelation. The tragedy: religious activity divorced from truth, zeal without knowledge (Romans 10:2).

Historical Context

First-century Judaism's oral tradition (later codified in Mishnah/Talmud) had grown exponentially, creating burdensome requirements Christ condemned (Matthew 23:4). Pharisaic interpretation became authoritative alongside Torah. Christianity's break with this system (Acts 15) freed Gentiles from these human additions to divine law.

Related Passages

Colossians 1:16 — All things created through Christ

Genesis 1:1 — Creation of heavens and earth

Study Questions

1. What "Jewish fables" have modern equivalents in your tradition—extra-biblical requirements presented as divine commands?
2. Do you elevate human traditions (denominational distinctives, cultural preferences) to the level of biblical authority?
3. How do you discern between helpful Christian tradition and "commandments of men" that obscure gospel truth?

Interlinear Text

μὴ προσέχοντες Ἰουδαϊκοῖς μύθοις καὶ ἐντολαῖς
Not giving heed to Jewish fables and commandments
G3361 G4337 G2451 G3454 G2532 G1785

ἀνθρώπων ἀποστρεφομένων τὴν ἀλήθειαν
of men that turn from the truth
G444 G654 G3588 G225

Additional Cross-References

Colossians 2:22 (Word): Which all are to perish with the using;) after the commandments and doctrines of men?

2 Timothy 4:4 (Truth): And they shall turn away their ears from the truth, and shall be turned unto fables.

2 Peter 2:22 (Truth): But it is happened unto them according to the true proverb, The dog is turned to his own vomit again; and the sow that was washed to her wallowing in the mire.

Matthew 15:9 (Word): But in vain they do worship me, teaching for doctrines the commandments of men.

Galatians 4:9 (Parallel theme): But now, after that ye have known God, or rather are known of God, how turn ye again to the weak and beggarly elements, whereunto ye desire again to be in bondage?

Isaiah 29:13 (Parallel theme): Wherefore the Lord said, Forasmuch as this people draw near me with their mouth, and with their lips do honour me, but have removed their heart far from me, and their fear toward me is taught by the precept of men:

Mark 7:7 (Word): Howbeit in vain do they worship me, teaching for doctrines the commandments of men.

From KJV Study • kjvstudy.org