

the righteousness of God with the law

Romans 3:1-5 What advantage then hath the Jew? or what profit is there of circumcision? 2 Much every way: chiefly, because that unto them were committed the oracles of God. 3 For what if some did not believe? shall their unbelief make the faith of God without effect? 4 God forbid: yea, let God be true, but every man a liar; as it is written, That thou mightest be justified in thy sayings, and mightest overcome when thou art judged. 5 But if our unrighteousness commend the righteousness of God, what shall we say? Is God unrighteous who taketh vengeance? (I speak as a man)

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Romans 3:21 But now the righteousness of God without the law is manifested, being witnessed by the law and the prophets;

- But now the righteousness of God
- without the law is manifested

There are two chapters that sound very similar in title, but very different in doctrinal application regarding the obtaining of righteousness under the Mosaic Covenant. This chapter deals with the provision of God's righteousness under Moses' Law. The chapter titled, "righteousness which is of the law", shows how that provision was actually translated unto righteousness. The two must not be confused and confusion over these subjects is the result of not understanding justification 'by faith'. The reader needs to be reminded here, of an argument made within this Theme Study, is that under the OT a just man was one who was righteous before the LORD and that righteousness was based on faithful obedience. This chapter deals with the **means** in which God's righteousness was provided, as the latter chapter deals with man's responsibility to that **means** to obtain that righteousness. Man's responsibility to the means, of God's provision under law, would be the method God used in obtaining the goal of that means!

Before entering discussion on God's provision of righteousness under the law, the question needs asked as to what is 'righteousness'?

The Righteousness of God

Who or what determines what is right? Hebrews 11:6 surmises that he who has faith must believe that God is, so it is from this perspective this question is answered. What needs to be measured is what is meant in saying that God is righteous and how then is

this righteousness of God relayed to man? The Psalmist sums it up best in defining what it means that God is righteous.

Psalms 145:17 The LORD is righteous in all his ways, and holy in all his works.

Simply put, God is right and always does right! A simple definition for the word 'righteousness' can easily be derived from this. Righteousness is simply doing or being right, from God's perspective.

KJB Definition: God is righteous – The LORD is right in all his ways.

KJB Definition: Righteousness – Doing or being right from God's perspective.

Passages, from man's perspective, are given here demonstrating as to how and why God was deemed to be righteous.

Exodus 9:27 And Pharaoh sent, and called for Moses and Aaron, and said unto them, I have sinned this time: the LORD is righteous, and I and my people are wicked.

Deuteronomy 32:4 He is the Rock, his work is perfect: for all his ways are judgment: a God of truth and without iniquity, just and right is he.

Judges 5:11 They that are delivered from the noise of archers in the places of drawing water, there shall they rehearse the righteous acts of the LORD, even the righteous acts toward the inhabitants of his villages in Israel: then shall the people of the LORD go down to the gates.

1 Samuel 12:7 Now therefore stand still, that I may reason with you before the LORD of all the righteous acts of the LORD, which he did to you and to your fathers.

2 Chronicles 12:6 Whereupon the princes of Israel and the king humbled themselves; and they said, The LORD is righteous.

Ezra 9:15 O LORD God of Israel, thou art righteous: for we remain yet escaped, as it is this day: behold, we are before thee in our trespasses: for we cannot stand before thee because of this.

Nehemiah 9:8 And foundest his heart faithful before thee, and madest a covenant with him to give the land of the Canaanites, the Hittites, the Amorites, and the Perizzites, and the Jebusites, and the Girgashites, to give it, I say, to his seed, and hast performed thy words; for thou art righteous:

Job 35:2 Thinkest thou this to be right, that thou saidst, My righteousness is more than God's?

Psalms 7:9 Oh let the wickedness of the wicked come to an end; but establish the just: **for the righteous God trieth the hearts and reins.**

Psalms 9:4 For **thou hast maintained my right** and my cause; **thou satest in the throne judging right.**

Psalms 9:8 And **he shall judge the world in righteousness**, he shall minister judgment to the people in **uprightness.**

Psalms 11:7 For the **righteous LORD loveth righteousness**; his countenance doth behold the **upright.**

Psalms 25:8 **Good and upright is the LORD**: therefore will he teach sinners in the way.

Psalms 35:28 And my tongue shall speak of **thy righteousness** and of thy praise all the day long.

Psalms 36:10 O continue thy lovingkindness unto them that know thee; and **thy righteousness to the upright in heart.**

Psalms 40:10 I have not hid **thy righteousness** within my heart; I have declared **thy faithfulness** and **thy salvation**: I have not concealed **thy lovingkindness** and **thy truth** from the great congregation.

Psalms 50:6 And the **heavens shall declare his righteousness**: for **God is judge himself**. Selah.

Psalms 71:19 **Thy righteousness also**, O God, is very high, who hast done great things: O God, who is like unto thee!

Psalms 92:15 To shew that **the LORD is upright**: he is my rock, and **there is no unrighteousness in him.**

Psalms 96:13 Before the LORD: for he cometh, for **he cometh to judge the earth**: **he shall judge the world with righteousness**, and the people with **his truth**.

Psalms 97:2 Clouds and darkness are round about him: **righteousness and judgment are the habitation of his throne.**

Psalms 103:17 But the mercy of the LORD is from everlasting to everlasting upon them that fear him, and **his righteousness unto children's children**;

Psalms 112:4 Unto the upright there ariseth light in the darkness: he is gracious, and full of compassion, and **righteous.**

Psalms 116:5 **Gracious is the LORD**, and **righteous**; yea, our God is merciful.

Jeremiah 4:2 And thou shalt swear, The LORD liveth, in truth, in judgment, and in righteousness; and the nations shall bless themselves in him, and in him shall they glory.

Micah 6:5 O my people, remember now what Balak king of Moab consulted, and what Balaam the son of Beor answered him from Shittim unto Gilgal; that ye may know the righteousness of the LORD.

Daniel 9:14 Therefore hath the LORD watched upon the evil, and brought it upon us: for the LORD our God is righteous in all his works which he doeth: for we obeyed not his voice.

...for the LORD our God is righteous in all his works which he doeth!

The Law of Righteousness

How then was this righteousness of God conveyed to man and in particular, to the nation of Israel? The law served many purposes and one of those purposes, which is the focus here, is that it served as the provision for righteousness to the Jew under law. As the Abrahamic Covenant covenanted for a seed and land, so the Mosaic Covenant covenanted for righteousness, for that seed to remain in that land!

Exodus 19:3-8 And Moses went up unto God, and the LORD called unto him out of the mountain, saying, Thus shalt thou say to the house of Jacob, and tell the children of Israel; 4 Ye have seen what I did unto the Egyptians, and how I bare you on eagles' wings, and brought you unto myself. 5 Now therefore, if ye will obey my voice indeed, and keep my covenant, then ye shall be a peculiar treasure unto me above all people: for all the earth is mine: 6 And ye shall be unto me a kingdom of priests, and an holy nation. These are the words which thou shalt speak unto the children of Israel. 7 And Moses came and called for the elders of the people, and laid before their faces all these words which the LORD commanded him. 8 And all the people answered together, and said, All that the LORD hath spoken we will do. And Moses returned the words of the people unto the LORD.

- if ye will obey my voice indeed
- and keep my covenant
- then ye shall be a peculiar treasure unto me above all people
- These are the words which thou shalt speak unto the children of Israel
- Moses came and called for the elders of the people
- and laid before their faces all these words which the LORD commanded him
- all the people answered together, and said, All that the LORD hath spoken we will do
- And Moses returned the words of the people unto the LORD

Deuteronomy 6:24-25 And the LORD commanded us to do all these statutes, to fear the LORD our God, for our good always, that he might preserve us alive, as it is at this day. 25 And it shall be our righteousness, if we observe to do all these commandments before the LORD our God, as he hath commanded us.

- the LORD commanded us to do all these statutes
- to fear the LORD our God
- it shall be our righteousness
- if we observe to do all these commandments before the LORD our God
- as he hath commanded us

"And it shall be our righteousness, if...". It couldn't be made any clearer that obedience to the commandments, contained within the law, constituted Israel's righteousness! This is exactly the point that Paul was making via inference when contrasting a truth 'now', as compared to a truth 'then', in referencing the manifestation of the righteousness of God.

Romans 3:21 But now the righteousness of God without the law is manifested, being witnessed by the law and the prophets;

- But now
- the righteousness of God
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No other deduction can be made other than that the means of the righteousness of God, under the law, was the law! The method in obtaining that means, under the law, is a separate subject.

Core Elements of the Righteous Law

Romans 9:31 But Israel, which followed after the law of righteousness, hath not attained to the law of righteousness.

- But Israel
- which followed after the law of righteousness...

The following scripture gives direct correlation between various components, of the law, as being the core of the righteousness of the law:

Deuteronomy 4:8 And what nation is there so great, that hath statutes and judgments so righteous as all this law, which I set before you this day?

- what nation is there so great
- that hath statutes and judgments
- so righteous as all this law

Deuteronomy 13:18 When thou shalt hearken to the voice of the LORD thy God, to keep all his commandments which I command thee this day, to do that which is right in the eyes of the LORD thy God.

- keep all his commandments which I command thee this day
- to do that which is right
- in the eyes of the LORD thy God

Deuteronomy 33:19 They shall call the people unto the mountain; there they shall offer sacrifices of righteousness: for they shall suck of the abundance of the seas, and of treasures hid in the sand.

- there they shall offer
- sacrifices of righteousness

Psalms 19:8 The statutes of the LORD are right, rejoicing the heart: the commandment of the LORD is pure, enlightening the eyes.

- statutes of the LORD are right

Psalms 19:9 The fear of the LORD is clean, enduring for ever: the judgments of the LORD are true and righteous altogether.

- the judgments of the LORD
- are true and righteous altogether

Psalms 33:4 For the word of the LORD is right; and all his works are done in truth.

- the word of the LORD is right

Psalms 106:3 Blessed are they that keep judgment, and he that doeth righteousness at all times.

- they that keep judgment
- and he that doeth righteousness at all times

Psalms 119:128 Therefore I esteem all thy precepts concerning all things to be right; and I hate every false way.

- I esteem all thy precepts
- concerning all things to be right

Psalms 119:137-138 TZADDI. Righteous art thou, O LORD, and upright are thy judgments. 138 Thy testimonies that thou hast commanded are righteous and very faithful.

- Righteous art thou, O LORD
- and upright are thy judgments
- Thy testimonies that thou hast commanded
- are righteous and very faithful

Psalms 119:144 The righteousness of thy testimonies is everlasting: give me understanding, and I shall live.

- The righteousness of thy testimonies

Psalms 119:160 Thy word is true from the beginning: and every one of thy righteous judgments endureth for ever.

- Thy word is true from the beginning
- and every one of thy righteous judgments

Psalms 119:172 My tongue shall speak of thy word: for all thy commandments are righteousness.

- My tongue shall speak of thy word
- for all thy commandments are righteousness

Isaiah 48:18 O that thou hadst hearkened to my commandments! then had thy peace been as a river, and thy righteousness as the waves of the sea:

- O that thou hadst hearkened to my commandments
- then had thy peace been as a river
- and thy righteousness as the waves of the sea

Isaiah 58:2 Yet they seek me daily, and delight to know my ways, as a nation that did righteousness, and forsook not the ordinance of their God: they ask of me the ordinances of justice; they take delight in approaching to God.

- delight to know my ways
- as a nation that did righteousness
- and forsook not the ordinance of their God
- they ask of me the ordinances of justice

Ezekiel 18:9 Hath walked in my statutes, and hath kept my judgments, to deal truly; he is just, he shall surely live, saith the Lord GOD.

- Hath walked in my statutes
- and hath kept my judgments
- to deal truly
- he is just

Luke 1:5-6 There was in the days of Herod, the king of Judaea, a certain priest named Zacharias, of the course of Abia: and his wife was of the daughters of Aaron, and her name was Elisabeth. 6 And they were both righteous before God, walking in all the commandments and ordinances of the Lord blameless.

- they were both **righteous** before God
- **walking** in all the **commandments** and **ordinances** of the Lord **blameless**

God's Righteousness Reflected Through the Law

The testimony recorded of Zacharias and his wife Zacharias, being righteous before God, walking in all the commandments and ordinances of the Lord blameless, coupled with Ezekiel 18:9, gives sound foundation to the subject covered within this chapter and to justification, which is 'by faith'. Again, a **just** man was one who was righteous before the Lord, and imputed righteousness was via faithful obedience.

Just as defined, that God being righteous means that God is right and always does right, God gave Israel the law in the form of commandments, judgments, laws, oracles, ordinances, precepts, statutes, etc., that Israel would be righteous in all that she would do.

In spite of hundreds of passages and clear distinction that Paul makes in discerning between the righteousness of God under law, from that of the righteousness of God 'now', without the law, there's still outright denial to an essential truth which prevents understanding between justification 'by faith' and 'through faith'.

There are 3 reasons for those who deny that the law had anything to do with man's justification under law:

1. Rejection of the KJB as God's final authority.
2. Not discerning between justification 'by faith' and 'through faith'.
3. Taking a few select passages out of context in not understanding the time-line from which Paul writes when penning epistles such as Romans and Galatians.

As this chapter dealt with the 'means', in which God's righteousness was provided under the law, other chapters are dedicated to man's responsibility under law, as well as clearly defining differences between justification 'by faith' and 'through faith'. A time-line, from which Paul writes, is also proved as well as demonstration given that other Bible versions deny these fundamental truths creating confusion and contradictions.