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The Righteous Shall Live By Faith

Some have used Acts 13:39 to say that the law is done away with and that NOW only in Christ is one justified. So let's look at it this verse together shall we?

Acts 13:39

Through him everyone who believes is justified from everything you could not be justified from by the law of Moses.

First, the question needs to be asked, "Could one EVER be justified by the law?" And second, "Was faith ever required before Christ?"

Galatians 3:11

Clearly no one is justified before God by the law, because, “The righteous will live by faith.”

Notice the reasoning given here as to why no one is justified before God by the law. It's a quote from the Old Testament that informs the righteous will live by faith.

AND consider

Romans 1:17

For in the gospel a righteousness from God is revealed, a righteousness that is by faith from first to last, just as it is written: “The righteous will live by faith.”

“The righteous will live by faith.” Again, an Old Testament quote.

So then, should "the righteous living by faith" be considered to be founded in the "New Testament" or in the Old Testament?

These verses here in Galatians and Romans are quoting from Habakkuk. 2:4.

Habakkuk 2:4

“...See, he is puffed up; his desires are not upright — but the righteous will live by his faith — “

Now we know that everything Paul taught had to line up with the Old Testament as even the Bereans tested him to the Scriptures.

Acts 17:11

Now the Bereans were of more noble character than the Thessalonians, for they received the message with great eagerness and examined the Scriptures every day to see if what Paul said was true.

Plus the Deuteronomy 13 test would have been a sure sign as well. Please see our teaching titled "The Deuteronomy 13 Test" for further details on that topic.

So, everything Paul said had to be in agreement with what those in the Old Testament would have lived in accordance with as well. So when he said ...

Romans 3:28

For we maintain that a man is justified by faith apart from observing the law.

We know that this was the fact for those living in the OT as well. This is why he also said just a few verses later ...

Romans 3:31

Do we, then, nullify the law by this faith? Not at all! Rather, we uphold the law.

Obedying the law NEVER justified anyone for their sin. However, living it ... plainly showed their love and obedience to the Father.

It's ALWAYS been about Faith. Always. Let's read Romans 1:17 again.

Romans 1:17

For in the gospel a righteousness from God is revealed, a righteousness that is by faith from first to last, just as it is written: “The righteous will live by faith.”

After looking at Romans 1:17 What does Hebrews say about ... the gospel?

Hebrews 4:2

For we also have had the gospel preached to us, just as they did; but the message they heard was of no value to them, because those who heard did not combine it with faith.

It must be noted that the author is referring to those that Moses led but did not enter the promise land. And what gospel did we hear... that they also heard?

It was that ALL, Hebrew and alien, could walk in His covenant. But as this verse in Hebrews says, they had to combine it with faith.

But why would that matter? This is the Old Testament we're talking about. ...

... Because faith without works is dead. Just as James said.

Compare what it says just a few verses before in Hebrews chapter 3 ...

Hebrews 3:15-19

As has just been said: "Today, if you hear his voice, do not harden your hearts as you did in the rebellion." Who were they who heard AND rebelled? Were they not all those Moses led out of Egypt? And with whom was he angry for forty years? Was it not with those who SINNED, whose bodies fell in the desert? And to whom did God swear that they would never enter his rest if not to those who DISOBEYED? So we see that they were not able to enter, because of their UNBELIEF.

Thus, the author here is equating disobedience with unbelief.

It's interesting to note that just 7 Chapters later, we read about those righteous people who walked BY FAITH ... in the OLD TESTAMENT. The chapter that is often referred to as "The Hall of Faith". Hebrews 11.

Consider ...

Hebrews 11:13

All these people were still living by faith when they died.

Weren't these people walking in the Old Covenant? Yet they were living by faith. As chapter 4:2 refers to, Faith has always been required for salvation.

Along with its referral in Galatians and Romans, Habakkuk 2:4 is also referred to in Hebrews chapter 10. It's a direct referral to the time of the antichrist. Starting with this quote from Habakkuk, let's read the verses that follow as well continuing on into the "Hall of Faith" chapter.

Hebrews 10:37-11:2

For in just a very little while, "He who is coming will come and will not delay. But my righteous one will live by faith. And if he shrinks back, I will not be pleased with him." But we are not of those who shrink back and are destroyed, but of those who BELIEVE and are saved. Now FAITH is being sure of what we hope for and certain of what we do not see. This is what the ancients were commended for.

"This is what the ancients were commended for"

How often has this verse been overlooked?

The righteous HAS and WILL live by faith, while pursuing God's perfect Law out of love and obedience.

So we find that Acts 13:39 is referencing anyone, like the Galatians or the Pharisees, who were trying to be justified by the Law FOR their salvation. When the fact remains, as it always has, that no one could EVER be justified by the law. Only through faith in Christ, the Word of God, is one justified ... and that

being proven by our obedience to that word of God.

We hope you have enjoyed this study. Remember, continue to test everything.

Shalom!

For more on this and other teachings, please visit us at www.testeverything.net

Shalom, and may Yahweh bless you in walking in the whole Word of God.

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