

THE BOOK OF

Chapter 3:21-26



What is an Excursus?

It's a detail discussion of a particular point that is inserted at the end of a chapter.

So the subject of this excursus is: Works of the Law!

First, Paul purposefully writes this phrase in the genitive (possessive) voice in Greek: ἔργα τοῦ νόμου.



ἔργα τοῦ νόμου Works of the Law

Paul uses this phrase only in Romans 3:20, 28; Gal. 2:16 (three times); 3:2, 5, and 10.

Each time Paul uses the genitive (possessive) plural, as you see above.



ἔργα τοῦ νόμου Works of the Law

Why is this important for us to know? Well, the "popular" belief and even the teaching of some Jewish scholars was that obedience to the Law gave a type of righteous standing and privilege before God! So much so, that it would merit a reward from YHWH!



ἔργα τοῦ νόμου Works of the Law

This legalism led many Jews to oppose Paul and our Lord Jesus!

Therefore, in Paul's exposition of righteousness he finds it absolutely necessary to exclude what Paul legitimately characterizes as "works of the Law!" Why?



ἔργα τοῦ νόμου Works of the Law

Because many of Paul's contemporaries asserted that a work from man <u>toward</u>
God serves as a element of a righteous status in God's sight!

Paul counters with the reality, as we will see in 4:1-6, any righteousness that avails before God comes wholly and only <u>FROM</u> God to man! When man inserts works into this realm it is flawed and fatal!



INTRODUCTION

Righteousness Revealed & Ratified

Verses 21-26 are known as the "heart and center" and the "doctrinal key" to the Book of Romans!

There is some unusual vocabulary used by Paul, which many scholars believe points to the death of our Lord Jesus as the fulfillment of the Jewish Day of Atonement. Though it is plausible, it is only theoretical. Yet, let's briefly look at these words.



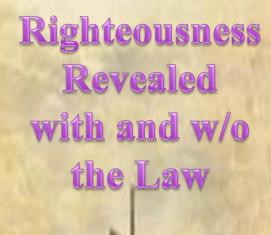
3:21-26

INTRODUCTION

Righteousness Revealed & Ratified

προτίθημι – "set forth publicly"; ίλαστήριον – "atoning sacrifice"; πάρεσις – "proof";

All these point to a formula that may serve as a confessional or liturgical purpose. As we come to this words, we'll discuss and see if we can apply them to our Lord's sacrifice and the Day of Atonement!



But now, apart from the Law, a righteousness of God has been revealed and is now out in the open, while being testified to by the Law and the Prophets...,

What now stands revealed is the "righteousness of God" which Paul will elaborate on in the verses following; yet, Paul has already explained how God is:

- + righteous in His judging (3:4);
- + how our unrighteousness expresses God's righteousness (3:5); and,
- + no one will be declared righteous by works of the Law (3:20).

Paul also maintains his earlier assertion that the righteousness of God is revealed in the Gospel; God has the power to save (Rom. 1:16-17)!

Righteousness
Revealed
with and w/o
the Law

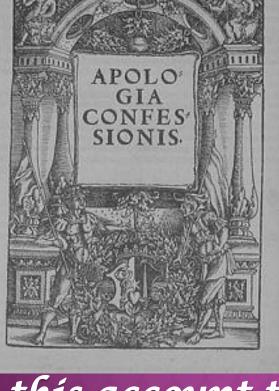
But now, apart from the Law, a righteousness of God has been revealed and is now out in the open, while being testified to by the Law and the Prophets...,

Note how this righteousness is "apart from the Law"; yet, at the same time is "being testified to by the Law and the Prophets!"

There is something that is separated from the Law, as well as that to which the Law bears witness!

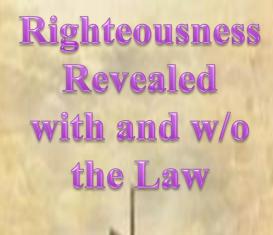
...a righteousness of God

Righteousness
Revealed
with and w/o
the Law



"Therefore, men cannot keep the law by their own strength, and they are all under sin and subject to eternal wrath and death. On

this account the law cannot free us from sin or justify us, but the promise of the forgiveness of sins and justification was given because of Christ" (Ap IV 40).



But now, apart from the Law, a righteousness of God has been revealed and is now out in the open, while being testified to by the Law and the Prophets...,

However, Paul also writes that this righteousness is something to which "the Law" testifies. Therefore, Paul is referring to the Mosaic Law.

The verb "testify" (μαρτυρέω) is very uncommon in all of Paul's letters. Yet, here, it maintains the forensic nature of the argument in a matter that is similar to St. John's use of it in 1 John 1:1, 2.

Righteousness
Revealed
with and w/o
the Law

But now, apart from the Law, a righteousness of God has been revealed and is now out in the open, while being testified to by the Law and the Prophets...,

So, the righteousness of God is without the Law, but not revealed without the Law; since, if it were, how could God's righteousness be witnessed by the Law?

The righteousness of God, however, is without the Law, which God by the Holy Spirit, the Spirit of grace, bestows on the believer (you) without the help of the Law.

Faith or
Faithfulness
Again?...and
Whose?

...that is, a righteousness of God through faith of/[in] Jesus Christ into all those who believe. You see, there is not a difference...,

The tensions between "the Law" and "righteousness" now begins to be resolved in relation to "faith!"

Now what is out in the open is "...a righteousness of God through faith of/[in] Jesus Christ into all those who believe."

Faith or
Faithfulness
Again?...and
Whose?

...that is, a righteousness of God through faith of/[in] Jesus Christ into all those who believe. You see, there is not a difference...,

So how are we to understand the phrase: "...through faith of/[in] Jesus Christ...?"

This is a prepositional phrase in the Greek, which is written in the Genitive! Meaning that it is subjective! So, it describes the righteousness of God that comes through an efficient cause: The Faith/Faithfulness of Jesus Christ!

Faith or
Faithfulness
Again?...and
Whose?

...that is, a righteousness of God through faith of/[in] Jesus Christ into all those who believe. You see, there is not a difference...,

Righteousness always begins from the faithfulness of God in Christ Jesus! This faith is NOT a human work; yet, a gracious gift from God as He moves us to trust in the Good News of Christ Jesus by the power of The Holy Spirit. We will study this more **fully in Romans 10:14-17.**



You see, there is not a difference, ²³ for all sinned and are lacking the glory of God, ²⁴ while being declared righteous undeservedly by His grace through the redemption, the one in Christ Jesus...,

So there is not a difference! Paul's argument is that God does not discriminate between peoples in this respect:

- + all are sinners; and,
- + deserve His wrath!

Righteousness is for all through...

FAITH!

Romans
3:22b-24

Righteousness of God is for All

You see, there is not a difference, ²³ for all sinned and are lacking the glory of God, ²⁴ while being declared righteous undeservedly by His grace through the redemption, the one in Christ Jesus...,

Therefore, we "lack" "come short of" God's glory due to sin! We are not obedient to His holy Law!

In v.24, is a remarkable jump as Paul begins to resolve the paradox in the "righteousness of God" which has lingered ever since he aligned it with the Good News in 1:17.

Romans 3:22b-24



You see, there is not a difference, ²³ for all sinned and are lacking the glory of God, ²⁴ while being declared righteous undeservedly by His grace through the redemption, the one in Christ Jesus...,

He resolves this paradox by the use of a "present" tense in the phrase "being declared righteous." This is the future eschatological verdict... you are righteous...right now...since you have received it as a free gift, through faith, in Jesus Christ, your Lord and Redeemer...by His grace!

Romans
3:22b-24

God's
Declaration of
Righteousness

²⁴...through the redemption, the one in Christ Jesus, 25 whom God set forth publicly [as] an atoning sacrifice, through faith, in His blood for proof of His righteousness on account of the passing over of sins which occurred previously and were yet unpaid 26in the delaying of God, toward the proof of His righteousness in the present momentous time, with the result that He is righteous and declares righteous the one from faith of/[in] Jesus.

Redemption: buy back; make free by paying of a ransom (cf. St. Mark 10:45).

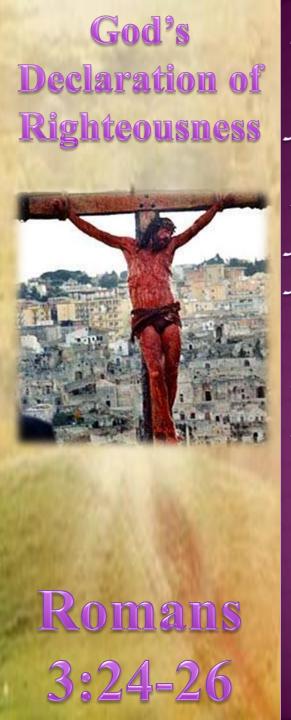
Romans
3:24b-26

God's
Declaration of
Righteousness

the one in forth ifice, or proof of t of the curred aid 26 in the proof resent sult that righteous

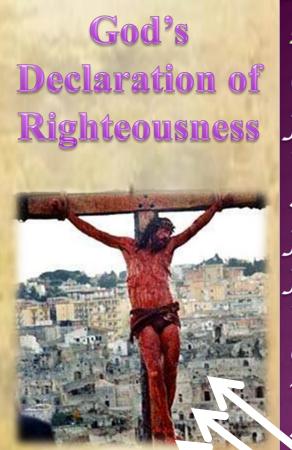
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Romans
3:24b-26



²⁴...through the redemption, the one in Christ Jesus, 25 whom God set forth publicly [as] an atoning sacrifice, through faith, in His blood for proof of His righteousness on account of the passing over of sins which occurred previously and were yet unpaid 26 in the delaying of God, toward the proof of His righteousness in the present momentous time, with the result that He is righteous and declares righteous the one from faith of/[in] Jesus.

προτίθημι – "set forth publicly"; ίλαστήριον – "atoning sacrifice"; πάρεσις – "proof";



²⁴...through the redemption, the one in Christ Jesus, 25 whom God set forth publicly [as] an atoning sacrifice, through faith, 4. His blood for proof of His righteousness on account of the passing over of sins which occurred previously and were yet unpaid 26 in the delaying of God, toward the proof of His righteousness in the present momentous time, with the result that He is righteous and declares righteous the one from faith of/[in] Jesus.

ποετί/ημι – "set forth publicly"; ίλαςτής τον – "atoning sacrifice"; πάρεσις – "proof";

Romans 3:24-26



THE IMPLICATIONS and **APPLICATION** of RIGHTEOUSNESS

ROMANS 3:27-31