

Righteousness

by

Nigel Johnstone

Published by Belmont Publications, 2012, 07786 346 357

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Printed by Aldine Print Ltd., Malvern. 01684 562 786

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foreword

To Faith,

This is what the reformation was about. This is what salvation is about.

As a man said to me, forty years ago, after he preached on the platform of Hermon Hall in Cathcart Road, Glasgow - now no more - and when he came and sat beside me in the congregation, having preached on the subject of Righteousness - "That was the heart of the gospel, I was preaching".

Indeed it was, Sir. And I, now, in my turn, declare it.

To Faith, I freely give what I have been given.

Nigel Johnstone,

Malvern july, 2012.

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A Song of Moses

Give ear, O heav'ns and I will speak;
to me, do thou give ear.
And hearken unto me, O earth;
to me, do thou draw near.

My doctrine shall as rain drop down;
as dew shall rest my speech.
As small rain lights on tender herb;
as showers on grass, I teach.

For I'll the LORD's name publish wide;
His Name I'll spread abroad.
O ! heav'n and earth, do ye ascribe
all greatness to our God !

Alone he is the rock. His work
is perfect; all his ways
are judgment; without sin is he.
A God of truth, he stays.

Deuteronomy 32:1-4.

*Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly in all wisdom;
teaching and admonishing one another in psalms and hymns
and spiritual songs, singing with grace in your hearts to the
Lord. Colossians 3:16.*

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Men's Balances

The generality of men are taught - by other men - whether by definite instruction or by vague references or merely by example, that men should do good and not evil. Society, generally, takes steps to curb the behaviour of those who do evil to the extent that it hinders, disrupts or destroys that particular society. Nations do the same among nations, by negotiation, then by imposing sanctions, then, ultimately, by taking up arms.

This suffices for men and nations to live together in reasonable harmony as long as there is general agreement about what is good and what is evil. Conflicts occur if there is disagreement about the nature of good and the nature of evil.

Man's general attitude to righteousness is that a man should do his best to do good and should hope that the good he does is greater than the harm he does in which case he may consider himself good. If evil overcomes a man to the extent that he feels it is greater than good, then he feels that he should redress the situation, in some way.

Most men appear to have the idea of a set of balances in their mind. And they live in the hope that the balance is reasonably on the side of what they apprehend to be good. Men, generally, think that if there is any kind of justice - other than that which

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men impose one on another - then this justice will account of men according to their theory of good and evil, and according to the balances that they imagine.

Men assume, of course, that their own apprehension of justice is balanced.

This is certainly the idea of most religion. By doing good, men hope that they will “redeem” themselves for any former evil they may, or may not, have done. Again, in balance. Some religious people work hard at this, doing admirable works which fair take the breath away and leave one impressed at the deprivation involved over significant periods of time. Others take things much more easily and have their own theory that one act will suffice for a lifetime.

Many see the balances in another way. They do not wish to do overmuch good as this would involve them living what they view as an “unbalanced” life. Too strict, maybe. A bit too harsh and uncomfortable. And they imagine that they have done enough good such that the balance is comfortably in their favour, for the time being, so they can rest content and be not too over concerned about good and evil until their conscience becomes a little disturbed about something, perhaps. Then there will be a flurry of activity which will, predictably, die down once the conscience is suitably calmed.

Again, men assume that their own, personal, conscience is a reliable measure of good and evil.

Doing some good work or other seems to delight some men so much that they are unable to keep quiet about it. And they, thus, reveal that they are very pleased with the state of their balances. Everyone will be made aware of their balance.

Their “good-evil” account, as it were, is comfortably positive.

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Plenty to draw on, for the future. A sense of gratification may be indulged, at this stage, I suppose.

Some men reveal their concerns, when, later in life, as death approaches, their activities in certain quarters increase somewhat. Evidently, they feel the need to “top up” their balance as their life draws to a close. Some men betray the increasing feeling that all is not well and, as they begin to ponder their options, discover, all too late, that what they contented themselves with in life, has not - in any wise - prepared them for death.

Many men, in their later years, find that they cannot cope with the certainty of that which they have deliberately avoided previously. They find the inevitable conclusion of their time on earth to be so momentous, so inescapable, that they retreat from reality itself. But they cannot escape. That for which they have left themselves unprepared is not, itself, unprepared in any way. Every preparation has been made.

For God shall bring every work into judgment, with every secret thing, whether it be good, or whether it be evil, Ecclesiastes 12:14.

In all this, they have not considered their Creator. That he is righteous. And that the judgment of Almighty God will not be as a man apprehends matters. The judgment of God will be according to *his* righteousness.

Remember, saith the wise man - Remember *now* thy Creator in the days of thy youth. While the evil days come not. Ecclesiastes 12:1.

As a man of threescore years I can testify that, even at my age, I have been shocked at what happens as one grows older.

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Nothing, but nothing, can prepare for what awaits all men as the decades slip by and the grave beckons.

This is one reason I write; to pass on to a coming generation all that I have learned in the past forty five years since my conversion and baptism. First, for quarter of a century, I sought the best teaching that it was possible to obtain in this present day. I also read widely and devoured most of the major Christian works of history. I studied my bible and learned what I could of the Greek language, such that I could understand the subtleties that the English obscures. What I have, myself, received, I have begun to publish.

Thus, in 2010, I versed The Lamentations of Jeremiah so that they can be read as poetry or sung. I did the same for The Song of Songs which is Solomon's. Also some selections of Isaiah. I thought, at the time, that poetry was all I could accomplish.

In 2011, I wrote a book, The Glory of the Lord, but I delayed its printing as I felt the need to re-write some of it. Then I delayed again, lest I was presuming too much. I still have it by me, as yet.

This year, 2012, however, I wrote three books and felt a necessity to put them into print. So this year I published Nailed to the Cross; then The Beginning of the Gospel; then Redemption and Restoration, then re-published my conversion testimony, written at the age of twenty one in 1972.

All I can, I desire to pass on. But if any would have what I have, they must go the way that I have gone. In order to do that, they must hear my word. Or hear the word of another who has gone the same way.

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I intreat the reader to hearken to what I say.
While the evil days come not.

For, believe me, once the evil days come, you will be shocked at what they do to you. Better to prepare now. Then you will be ready. They are not ready, who continue in the imagination of their own heart, without instruction from the word of God.

For it is abundantly clear, from even the most cursory glance at the book which starts, "In the beginning God created," and ends, "Come, Lord Jesus," that such notions as I have outlined above are - utterly - foreign to the word of God.

Two covenants are outlined throughout the Hebrew and Greek scriptures. Neither one of these covenants bears the slightest resemblance to what I have described, which is what I have generally observed amongst men during my threescore years on this earth.

Hence, I wish to consider the subject of Righteousness.

And I wish to consider this subject from the only sensible source of discovery - the word of God. Many would take up this task and would start by posing questions. I agree that the asking of questions is often a sign of intelligence and is, sometimes, the way to arrive at conclusions. Here, not so. For the mind of man is, evidently from the above, so incapable of assessing truth - when it comes to the subject of righteousness - that I prefer to consider only those questions which are posed - and answered - in the word of God.

As an external member of a local "Theological" College Library, I have access to 36,000 volumes including all of Martin Luther's writings; all of John Calvin's; all sixty volumes of J N Darby; all of William Huntington's works, shelf upon

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shelf of varied commentaries on every book of the bible; forty volumes of Nicene and Post Nicene “Fathers” and heaps upon heaps more.

I have consulted not one single book in my present study of Righteousness. I have referenced only the Authorised Version of the scriptures [AV], The Englishman’s Greek New Testament 1877 [EGNT] and Young’s Analytical Concordance [Young]. I use no other book in my studies. Rarely, I briefly consult Liddel & Scott.

All we need to know about righteousness has been revealed in the word of God.
Everything.

We need, however, to receive the instruction of the word of God in the way in which it is given. For the issues of righteousness are truly vast. From the foundation of the world to the end of time are the issues of righteousness. From earth to heaven do they reach. From the dust of man’s creation to the throne of the Almighty do they scale.

It therefore behoves us to tread carefully. To go wisely. To be patient in our enquiry. To be circumspect in our questions. To be diligent in our search.

For the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men, Romans 1:18. To be ungodly and unrighteous in the way in which we enquire into righteousness would be to increase wrath, not flee from it. Let us flee from the wrath to come and let us be diligent, patient, and intelligent in our flight.

May he whose wrath it is, help us in our flight, that we may find a safe refuge. Amen.

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I, myself, have found a refuge.

So let the reader take my hand that we may walk in paths of righteousness, together.

If the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men, then it must also be true that God is pleased with godliness and righteousness. God is the rewarder of them who diligently seek him. Thus, in seeking God, we should do so, first, in a godly way and we should be occupied, secondly, regarding righteousness.

The reward of righteousness is evident from the man who stands out as a prime example of obtaining righteousness - Abraham. To Abraham did God himself say, I am thy shield and thy exceeding great reward, Genesis 15:1.

God, himself, is the reward of them who obtain righteousness. And God, himself, is the one who rewards those who diligently seek him, with the reward of himself.

Therefore it is self evident that, in making our enquiries, we must - diligently - find both our questions and our answers in the word which God has given. In the word of God, we find questions posed regarding righteousness. And those questions are then answered for us.

Job's Questions

Job's question is, How shall man be just with God ? Job 9:2.

This is actually three questions, layered into one.

Shall man be just ?

Shall man be just with God ?

How shall man be just with God ?

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In order to answer these questions I have catalogued every occurrence of every Greek word I can find related to righteousness in the Greek scriptures. This catalogue is presented in Appendix One at the rear of the book.

I can find twenty five different Greek words which occur a total of just under four hundred times throughout the Greek scriptures. Just by cataloguing the words relating to the subject it becomes abundantly clear how important righteousness is in the gospel of Jesus Christ, the Son of God.

It is immediately apparent that this subject is vast. And that this subject is vastly important to every man on earth. To ignore righteousness or to be ignorant about its place in the gospel is to neglect a great salvation. And if we neglect so great a salvation, how shall we escape from the wrath which is to come ? Hebrews 2:3.

We shall not, is the plain fact of the matter.

Those who remain wilfully ignorant of the salvation of God are evidently preoccupied with other things. But, Jesus tells us - one thing is needful, Luke 10:41.

We have but a short time on this earth. Then eternity. When time ends, there shall be a condition which, if one has not, righteously, resolved all moral and spiritual matters prior to time ending, shall result in a state that will never, ever change. Men say that eternity “stretches” before them. But the actual experience of this particular state will not “stretch” anywhere. It will remain fixed, permanently, without any change whatsoever. Jesus described, several times, what this state will be if we are not saved from it. What he describes is a fixed condition that will remain exactly so. Without any possibility of change.

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This condition, according to his words, involves weeping, Matthew 8:12; gnashing of teeth, Matthew 22:13; a worm, within, that never dies, Mark 9:48; a fire that is not quenched, Mark 9:44; and torment, Luke 16:23. These are the very words of Jesus. These are not lurid descriptions. They are not sadistic expressions, uttered with vindictiveness. They are calm statements of fact from the lips of the Saviour, Jesus Christ.

He has warned us of this state and there is but one name, given under heaven, whereby we must - we must - be saved. It is his own name - the name of Jesus Christ. And salvation is obtained by him. And righteousness, clearly - from just the fact of the four hundred references to it - is hugely important in salvation.

Neglect righteousness and one neglects salvation.

Neglect salvation and one will not escape from the wrath to come. For the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against unrighteousness. This wrath is the cause of the state that Jesus describes.

Having listed out all that I can find in the Greek scriptures relating to righteousness, my enquiry has then focussed on the first book we have in the Greek scriptures - Matthew.

In order to discover what is revealed to us about righteousness in Matthew, I have written out all the occurrences I can find of the twenty five words associated with righteousness in that book. The list of these is in Appendix Two at the rear of the book. Having done this, I have then summarised my findings.

I can find twenty nine occurrences of direct references to

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righteousness and words relating to righteousness in the Book of Matthew. Jesus himself spoke twenty six of these occurrences.

Jesus' Words

In comparison, Jesus, in Matthew, uses the word *agape* - love - six times in a varied way. Once, and only once, does he say, Love thine enemies. And it is very clear, in both context and content, that he says it to those who have - first - obtained righteousness.

I say this, now, at the beginning of this book, for it is very plain to me that we are in the perilous times of which the apostles prophecied. "Deceivableness of unrighteousness" is everywhere. There is a mass uprising - an apostacy - which has taken over the profession of Christ, and its main characteristic is unrighteousness, hence the need to publish this my book.

Even the very word "apostacy" has been meddled with to make it appear other than what it is, so that we will not recognise it when it has happened. And it has - now - happened.

Stasis is a sedition, an uprising, a revolt.

Apo - stasis is a superlative uprising, not anything whatsoever to do with either "falling" or "away". The uprising, *en masse*, has not gone away anywhere. It has taken over everything. It is the faithful who have been obliged to separate "away".

Thus those who unrighteously deceive, do so by making it appear that the faithful are the ones who are "falling" "away".

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But it becomes all so clear when the sheep speak righteousness.

And the goats, attempting to say "Shibboleth" just cannot frame the word aright.

Their safety, they think, who apostacise from the truth, is in their numbers as they make their sport. But they have forgotten that the Philistines were three thousand strong in their "place of worship" and the lone, despised, broken man with empty eye sockets was he whose hands were on the pillars of their edifice. They had not noticed that there was that which came down to the body which was from his head. Therein was all the strength this solitary man required.

Sport away, Philistine. Thy house is trembling. Its pillars are in the hands of him who ye despise.

For Samson had prayed, alone in his darkness, Let me be avenged. And God heard Samson, not the cries of those whose "place of worship" was collapsing.

These apostacisers know nothing of a baptism of repentance in the wilderness. Nothing of finding an invisible gate that few find. Even if found, many shall seek to enter this straitest of all gates and shall not be able. They can sit in a pew all their lives trying, if they wish. Only those who agonise through this invisible gate will find life. Only those who wrestle shall obtain the blessing. They will not let go until they are blessed. This is the seed of Jacob, Genesis 32:24.

I came not to call the righteous, said Jesus - that is, those who suppose they already have their own righteousness - but sinners to repentance. That is, they who know they have none.

This my book is written for those who hunger and thirst after

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righteousness. Blessed are they, for they shall be filled.

Of the English translation of the Greek scriptures, Jesus words take up, approximately, 22%. Altogether, the record of his actual sayings is only about twice that of this my book. His words are profound. The actual wording is of very plain language. And there is little of it. Breathakingly little. Yet these words fill the earth with their wisdom. Any man who ignores these words is like a man walking over a precipice who cares not where he goes and cares not what he does.

It is plain from the twenty nine texts, all related to the words of righteousness, detailed in Appendix Two at the rear of the book, that Jesus is describing, in the course of the book that Matthew wrote, two classes of person who have two different attitudes to righteousness.

The book of Matthew, as a whole, is evidently concerned with the kingdom of heaven and the King thereof. The kingdom of heaven, that is, as opposed to any kind of kingdom - especially any kind of religious kingdom - on earth.

God has demonstrated his ways with regard to earthly kings and kingdoms. His ways with the Egyptian Pharaoh may be seen in Genesis. His ways with the Kings of Babylon, Nebuchadnezzar and Belshazzar, may be seen in the book of Daniel. There also we see how God deals with Darius the Mede. Having humbled these four men - sufficient to show that he has dealt with all that might appear from north, south, east and west - we see that God reveals to Daniel, his servant, the fate of all future earthly kingdoms.

Six earthly kingdoms have now fallen. Yet there is one more which, becoming diverse, disappears only to survive in an unprecedented form until it reaches a pinnacle. Then cometh

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the end. Let him who reads, understand.

As to earthly religious kingdoms there was only - ever - one; the kingdom of Israel. And that kingdom clearly ended when John the Baptist came preaching in the wilderness saying, Repent ye for the kingdom of heaven is at hand. The coming of the kingdom of heaven heralded the redundancy of the only, valid, religious kingdom on earth.

Anyone who, now, sets up any kind - any kind at all - of a religious earthly kingdom is, by so much as they do it, dishonouring the King of the kingdom of heaven.

Think not to say within yourselves, Matthew 3:9, We have Abraham to our father, said John the Baptist who prepared the way of the Lord. For God is able of these stones to raise up children unto Abraham. Yes, God is able to raise up children of faith of these stones - the stones which will be builded together into an house for the living God. These stones which had come to the baptism of repentance, he says; these stones.

For the messenger of the covenant shall command the servant - the messenger sent before his face - to fill the stones up with water in a baptism of repentance. Then shall they bring forth, after the baptism of the Holy Ghost, fine wine for the *archetriklinos* - the chief of three, John 2:1 - 11. These stones shall be born of water and of the Spirit and shall form an house, being built together in faith. Here, there will be union.

Yes, now, the only, valid, religious kingdom on earth is redundant. So, therefore, now - repent.

Both this kingdom and any other religious kingdom on earth; both this house and any other religious house on earth; will be left desolate.

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As individuals, must all repent; first - to fulfil all righteousness - out of Israel; then, the middle wall of partition being broken down in the death of Christ, out of all nations. For all who repent and believe the gospel of the kingdom shall be baptised with the Holy Ghost, both Jew and Gentile. For, now, there is no longer any difference.

Those who repented and were baptised of John were thus prepared for the face of the Lord. And when Jesus began to preach, Matthew 4:17, Repent: for the kingdom of heaven is at hand - exactly the same message as John - then those who had already received John's ministry followed Jesus as his disciples, for John was now in prison, Matthew 4:12.

These disciples, baptised of John and already repentant, followed Jesus who had gone up into - both upwards in ascent and inwards in admission - a mountain, leaving the general multitudes behind. To these disciples did Jesus open his mouth and say many things in Matthew chapters five to eight.

Pertinent to the subject in hand - righteousness - Jesus describes some who shall not enter the kingdom of heaven. Their righteousness does not exceed that of the scribes and Pharisees.

Jesus' Words I

1. - Matthew 5:20.

For I say unto you, That except your righteousness exceed that of the scribes and Pharisees, ye shall in no case enter into the kingdom of heaven.

Note first and foremost and note, above all, that a

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righteousness is required for admission to the kingdom of heaven. Those without any righteousness are already barred entrance for having no righteousness at all is not to have one that exceeds that of the other party.

Some might think to enter the kingdom of heaven with no righteousness at all and might claim that having none at all is a superior condition to having whatever the scribes and Pharisees possessed.

Words have no meaning at all if one tries to argue that not having something is the same as having something that exceeds something else. "Except your righteousness exceed" of necessity assumes a righteousness exists. It would be utterly unjust, given the effort involved in these people having what they had, to barr them from entrance and to permit other people, who had nothing at all, to gain entrance.

Even a minimal acquaintance with scripture will demolish this attempt at a clever sidestepping of the absolute necessity of righteousness. If no righteousness is required at all to enter the kingdom of heaven, then why did Jesus go on to speak of righteousness in twenty seven other places and why is the subject mentioned about four hundred times, directly as such in wording, and alluded to in multitudes more times, in the Greek scriptures ?

Thus to having no righteousness at all.

As to having any other kind of inferior righteousness than that which Jesus refers to, it is pointless attempting to make any kind of case in order to gain entrance to the kingdom of heaven. If one does not have a righteousness like the one that Jesus has mentioned, it is pointless making any case at all for he has categorically said, In no case, shall ye enter in. No case

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means - no case. Case dismissed before case has even been considered. There is no discussion of cases from henceforth.

Jesus Christ has the keys. Nobody else. He shutteth and no man openeth. He openeth and no man shutteth.

In order to enter the kingdom of heaven, one needs a superior righteousness to that of a scribe or a Pharisee.

These men had grown up in Israel under a religious system of rigour and discipline. Their entire life was about religion. Morning, noon and night were they occupied in religious activity. And these were, also, religious professionals who were also occupied in their daytime hours with religion. Some, maybe all, had trades such as did Saul of Tarsus, a tent maker. These were not idle men.

In order to have the position they occupied, they would have known the scriptures - the Hebrew scriptures - very thoroughly indeed. Since the Hebrew scriptures were hand written on scrolls, they were kept in the synagogue, usually. Very rich people might have just been able to have their own scroll, as did the Ethiopian eunuch who was of such high authority in Queen Candace's empire that he had use of a chariot and a scroll of the prophet Isaiah. This was a rare exception.

The normal procedure would be to go to the synagogue and request a scroll. A further wait would ensue whilst the correct scroll - if available - was brought. If someone else was reading the scroll - synagogues might only have a limited number of copies - then a further wait was involved.

Finally, one would have access to the scroll and there was presumably a system of sharing so that everyone could have a

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turn. Thus time would have been of the essence in reading it.

There are no vowels in Hebrew. One has to be fairly familiar with the text in order to understand what it says. That is why Jews begin learning scripture at an early age. As Paul says to Timothy, Thou hast known the holy scriptures - *hieros grammata* - of a child.

From infancy were the holy letters read with reverence and difficulty in such circumstances. Scribes and Pharisees would have had exceptional knowledge of scripture - gained in these kind of circumstances - in order to be what they were.

Morning and evening sacrifices were obligatory. The entire sabbath from dawn to dusk was holy. No servile work was done. No activity that was in any way connected with any sort of non-religious activity was permitted. It was a holy day. All of it.

Strict regulations governed what food preparation could be carried out on the sabbath.

There were religious feasts on particular days during the year. All were obligatory. Strict moral codes prevented any kind of entertainment. Any kind. Ever.

Clothing was regulated for both male and female.

Marriage was strictly adhered to and the whole nation was under obligation to be married or celibate. There was no exception to this.

Adultery was punishable by death.

Daily prayer was advocated. Which meant going to the temple.

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Probably three times a day. Before work, at lunchtime and on the way home from work, probably. Some would be, evidently, more zealous and that would impose more on others, by example.

This was a religious society where one would have to - have to - be seen to be doing what one ought to be doing. Scribes and Pharisees would be setting the example.

Tithing of all that one possessed was obligatory. Even down to herbs. Animal livestock was scrupulously accounted for in order that tithing could be regulated properly.

There was strict control of speech. Blasphemy of any kind was punished severely.

This was a society wholly given to religion.
And the scribes and Pharisees were at the top of it.

This is what scribes and Pharisees had and Jesus says - in no case shall ye enter the kingdom of heaven if your righteousness does not exceed *this*.

In *no* case whatsoever - ever- shall anyone without a superior righteousness than *this*, enter into the kingdom of heaven.

I am not straining the context. This is exactly what Jesus said. These are the kind of men of which he spoke. They were not idiots. They were not lazy. They were not self indulgent. They simply could not be if they were scribes and Pharisees.

Israel, at that time, was a highly organised, religiously competitive society which was respectable enough and strong enough to have achieved considerable respect by no less than the Roman Empire.

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Their *life* was about religion. And even the Roman governance stayed at a moderate distance from Jewish matters, permitting them generous latitude in their own bureaucratic and, even, judicial, affairs.

These people were the pinnacle of mankind, in religion, brought up as Jews from the day they were circumcised - the eighth day of their little lives.

Every single person in the kingdom of heaven has a righteousness that is superior to what I have just described.

No exceptions. Otherwise, tell me what Jesus' words, reported by Matthew, actually mean.

2. - Matthew 5:45.

Your Father.....sendeth rainon the unjust.

Jesus says that rain falls on people who are unjust, Matthew 5:45. That is, they do not have a righteousness that makes them just. God, still, in mercy, allows them rain for their crops and herds and drinking and washing and sanitation. He does not have to, for they have no righteousness.

But he does. Because he is merciful.

And they, still, remain unjust, despite God's merciful treatment of them in giving them rain. They persist in not obtaining a righteousness that makes them just.

3. - Matthew 9:13.

I am not come to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance.

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Jesus does not say that anyone is, actually, righteous. Only that he has not come to call such. He has come to call sinners to repentance.

If any suppose that they already have a righteousness then, presumably, they will pay no heed to the call of Jesus to repentance.

Thus, Jesus does not exclude them. They, on the basis of what they regard as their own righteousness, exclude themselves from repentance.

And remain unrepentant.

4. - Matthew 12:37.

By thy words shalt thou be justified and by thy words shalt thou be condemned.

Some people are justified by their words. Therefore they have a righteousness. Other some condemn themselves by the very words they utter. In the end, nothing else is required for their condemnation than their own words which they, themselves, have spoken.

Since they are not of the former sort - justified - these did not obtain righteousness. Then, having not obtained righteousness, they opened their own mouths and, by so doing, uttered their own condemnation.

5. - Matthew 13:49.

At the end of the world: the angels shall come forth, and sever the wicked from among the just.

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Wicked people were living among just people. They were not segregated. They lived in proximity one to another. The wicked remained wicked, despite living beside people who evidently knew how to obtain a righteousness that made them just. Just people, in order to remain just people would, necessarily - in the very meaning of the word - be desirous of telling wicked people how to stop being wicked and how to learn to be just.

Otherwise words do not have any meaning, here.

And, still, these wicked people remained wicked, right up until the time that angels came forth and severed them from the just people.

The just people did not move away from the wicked people. It took angelic intervention to sever the wicked from among the just.

6. - Matthew 21:32.

John came unto you in the way of righteousness and ye believed him not.

John was desirous that men might repent, for the kingdom of heaven was at hand. These did not believe him.

But publicans - they who collected, on behalf of the Roman Empire, taxes from the people of Israel and were ostracised and despised for doing so - believed John. So did harlots. Both publicans and harlots entered the kingdom of heaven. Then, these spoken of saw the example that publicans and harlots set them - and *still* did not repent.

They had not believed, because they did not repent.

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And, *still*, they did not repent. So they, *still*, did not believe.

John was in the way of righteousness. Had these followed John, they would have found righteousness. They would have been in the way of it, themselves. But they chose not to follow John. Because they did not believe him.

Because they remained unrepentant.

7. - Matthew 23:28.

Even so ye also outwardly appear righteous unto men, but within ye are full of hypocrisy and iniquity.

Now, Jesus, publicly to the multitude and to his disciples, verse 1, exposes the true condition of the scribes and Pharisees. Only after they have revealed their true character by their behaviour, and only after they have hindered others from entering the kingdom of heaven, verse 13.

This is “that of the scribes and Pharisees” which must be exceeded to gain entrance to the kingdom of heaven. An appearance before men which is in contradiction to the unseen character within.

The characteristics of what is within are hypocrisy and iniquity.

As to what is without, its single characteristic, for Jesus mentions none other, is that it is - just an appearance. What they have, is not real.

To enter the kingdom of heaven, therefore, what is needed is real righteousness.

Righteousness

Those who have no real righteousness but appear to have one in front of men in order to be superior in religion, are described, by Jesus Christ, as Serpents, then, Generation of vipers.

Such men were leaders in a religious capacity. They taught other people about religion. They were above the people and were, apparently, an example to others. These had taken over the things of religion. These did not go into the kingdom of heaven and they shut it up to other people.

It is quite obvious, by this description, that scribes and Pharisees exist today.

But it is quite obvious, by the previous description of these, that they were far superior to the kind of thing displayed nowadays. If scribes and Pharisees did not enter into the kingdom of heaven then, I do not see how today's rather inferior variety have any possibility of doing so now.

As to the strength of Jesus' words, he who also said, Love thine enemies, I would comment that these were not personal enemies who did only personal harm to Jesus personally.

We can read what Jesus did when rough soldiers took his clothes from him and dressed him in a mocking purple robe. We know what he did in response to them who battered his head with a thick rod whilst he was blindfolded. We are aware what he did when they crammed a humiliating crown of thorns down on his bruised scalp. We can remember what his response was when he was scourged after the Roman fashion.

Nothing.

Righteousness

He, who had the authority and power to summon legions of angels without a moment's hesitation, did absolutely nothing.

But these Serpents and vipers were harming the work of God; they were harming the people of God; they were harming every repentant sinner in the entire locality by their shocking example and their deliberate hindrance. These were endangering the eternal salvation of multitudes.

Jesus calls these scribes and Pharisees, Serpents and generation of vipers because that is what they were and that is what they needed to be exposed as being.

Publicly.

Serpent is the genus, I would say, within which viper is the species.

They had the characteristics of the whole genus of serpents, right from the very beginning - lying and murdering. Facing them in John 8, Jesus says, Ye are of your father the devil and the lusts of your father will ye do. He was a murderer and a liar from the beginning, and abode not in the truth. They then prove his words by taking up stones to unlawfully kill him having previously conspired, in secret, to murder him; the meanwhile lying about the fact that they had done so.

The Serpent left truth and lied to Eve. Which brought the race down into death. He lies to every soul of man. And he has murdered humanity. And these men whom Jesus calls Serpents and vipers are helpers in this work of destruction.

They are actually serpents in their own right, characterised by the whole genus, serpent.

They are, in addition, generated by vipers.

Righteousness

They are not born of water and of the Spirit.

For they have not submitted to the baptism of John. And, thus, they do not believe.

Plenty of religion. More religion than can be adequately described, in fact.

Just no repentance.

And no faith.

A viper possesses, I understand, the most efficient venom delivery system in the snake world. Yet, it is not an inherently aggressive creature. The poisonous bite of this particular species of serpent is a means of defense, when cornered or threatened.

Such a creature is never really known until it comes under extreme pressure. Sly, slinking, shy of attention, crawling in dark places, never really appreciated for its true character, it will only ever appear as it really is when under extreme pressure of exposure or when, finally, it is out in the open, revealed for what it is and under threat of extinction. Then - the venom will be used in self preservation.

A viper comes out of the fire, just before its flaming destruction, and bites the servant of God on the hand as he is occupied in evangelising, shivering with cold and collecting sticks to make a fire after a shipwreck on his way to answer to Caesar for daring to preach Christ.

That is the kind of entity that generated scribes and Pharisees. As well as their whole existence being within - and only within - the realm of Serpent, their immediate parentage, personal habitat, and mode of behaviour was viper.

An entity that, shortly before it is burnt in the fires of

Righteousness

destruction, lashes out at a minister of Christ, attempting to murder him as he tries to keep warm on his way to possible execution for his faithfulness.

How can such escape the damnation of hell ?

With a righteousness that is outward before men, they cannot.

Inwardly full of hypocrisy and iniquity, devoid of a righteousness that exceeds an outward appearance before men, they are doomed.

~ ~ ~ ~ ~

Six texts speak of a certain condition of mankind.
A seventh exposes this condition for what it really is.
Three more complete the tenfold description.

~ ~ ~ ~ ~

8. - Matthew 23:29.

Ye garnish the sepulchres of the righteous.

The closest these kind of people get to real righteousness is to garnish the sepulchres of the genuinely righteous. Jesus only speaks of the sepulchres of the righteous. He shows no interest in the sepulchres of those who die in unrepentance, having not obtained righteousness.

9. - Matthew 25:31.

Then shall the righteous answer.

When the Son of man shall come in his glory, and all the holy

Righteousness

angels with him, then shall he sit upon the throne in his glory. Then, and only then, shall he judge righteous judgment. All nations shall be gathered before him. From the whole of time. Right back to the beginning. All the way back to Adam. Every man that ever lived shall stand before him.

And he shall separate them, as a shepherd divideth sheep from goats.

The sheep he shall set on his right hand; the goats on the left.

Then shall the Son of man speak as King.

Once enthroned as such, it is said, Thy throne, O God, is for ever and ever. Psalm 45:6. The sceptre of thy kingdom is a right sceptre - a righteous sceptre. Thou lovest righteousness and hatest wickedness.

Therefore God, thy God, hath anointed thee with the oil of gladness above thy fellows. The righteous LORD loveth righteousness. Thus he hath anointed this Lord to judge in righteousness.

And thus shall this Son of man separate sheep from goats. They are already sheep and goats. It is a matter of separating what already is apparent. This is the day that matters. Not each passing day. Not any notable day.

This is the day when all shall be judged and every secret thing shall be revealed. God shall judge the secrets of men, by Jesus Christ according to my gospel, says the Apostle Paul, Romans 2:16. This is the day when secrets shall be judged. The day when a righteousness that was only an appearance before men shall be revealed for what it is. And when the hypocrisy beneath it shall be exposed.

Sometimes it happens during life that men's religion collapses;

Righteousness

they are exposed for their pretence and their shame is revealed publicly. Mostly, it is not so. The day shall declare it.

This day - when we shall all stand before the judgment seat of Christ, to receive for the things done in the body, whether they be good or whether they be bad.

We see some who appear as goats. This is their real state, before the Son of man. Now, men only see, and judge, by the outward appearance. But God looketh on the heart; and in this judgment after time is ended, the reality is the appearance. There is no difference, in this judgment, between what is within and what appears.

They speak, only once, in the judgment.
What they utter condemns them.

Lord, they say, When saw we thee an hungred, or athirst, or a stranger, or naked, or sick, or in prison, and did not minister unto thee ?

It is evident that these people had not ministered to the hungry, the thirsty, the stranger, the naked, the sick and the imprisoned. They do not deny it. They cannot deny it for the one to whom they did not minister is he who judges them.

Possibly they ministered to other some in the conditions of hunger, thirst and so forth. Possibly not. But that they did not do so to *him*, who judges righteous judgment, was all important. He is both witness, victim and Judge.

In their attempt to justify themselves - expressing their disbelief that *he* was ever involved, they admit that they never saw Jesus Christ, the Lord, in his manifestation within his own brethren. Had they repented and believed on him, they would

Righteousness

have loved these brethren.

No repentance, no faith, no love, no ministering.

They condemn themselves by their own words.

10. - Matthew 25:46.

~~~~~There is a word that is absent, here.~~~~~

In speaking of this day of judgment, Jesus does not actually say, as such, that it shall be he who judges. For at the time he spoke these words, he had not, yet, been raised by the Father and had not, yet, been glorified. Jesus states, factually, that the Son of man shall come in his glory and shall sit upon his throne and he shall separate the nations into sheep and goats.

The fact is that God shall elevate one to his right hand who deserves, in righteousness, to be so elevated. And God shall, in righteousness, deliver all things into the hand of that one who is suited, righteously, to judge all men.

This one shall be The Son. He shall also be of man.

The Son; of man, is he who, alone, could ever be suited to receive all things from the Father.

But at the time Jesus spoke these words, he refrained from actually stating who the Son of man would be.

Such is the breathtaking humility of the meekness and lowliness of Christ.

Shall we not take his yoke and his burden upon us, who is so meek and lowly of heart ?

And shall we not, thus, find rest for our souls ?

Righteousness

For, Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, saith he. And I will give you rest. Matthew 11:28 - 30.

For his yoke is easy. His burden is light.

I can testify to that, myself.

Those who have such an easy yoke and a light burden are called, the righteous, in Matthew 25:37, who were so unburdened by their ministering to others that they didn't even know they had done it. Lord, when ? - they say.

They had done such things without planning it, without recording it, without noticing it.

Righteous, is how they are described.

But the goats, who also say, When ? Are not called anything.

"Them" on the left hand, verse 41.

"They" also answer him, verse 44.

Shall he answer "them", verse 45.

No righteousness.

Matthew 25:46. And these shall go away into everlasting punishment.

Jesus' Words II

The passages in Matthew which contain references to the word righteousness itself - and to other words associated with righteousness - indicate two types of approach to righteousness. The first kind we have seen. The second remains to be examined.

Righteousness

1.- Matthew 5:6.

Blessed are they which do hunger and thirst after righteousness: for they shall be filled.

The actual Greek words in the Stephens 1550 Received Text are - *makarioi oi peinvntes kai dipsontes ten dikaiosenen*. Blessed who hunger and thirst the righteousness.

There is no “after”. One cannot say that these hunger and thirst after righteousness, only that something *associated* with righteousness causes the cravings. In Matthew 25:37 the righteous say, When saw we thee hungering and fed thee. Or thirsting and gave thee to drink - *e dipsonta kai hepotisamen*. Athirst, as such. No “after” anything. The words describe a craving, no more.

When spoken in a material way, thirst is - solely - for water. All drinks contain water and it is water that is life giving and it is water that the body craves. Therefore the word “thirst” of itself contains the idea of “thirst for water”.

Used figuratively, the wording does not specify what, exactly, causes the craving or how, precisely, the craving can be relieved.

Nor does Jesus say that these crave to be filled with righteousness itself. Nor do his words promise that they will be. Nor do the words mean that these crave to possess righteousness.

All that can be inferred, absolutely, by these words is :-

1. Righteousness, or something associated with righteousness, causes cravings.
2. Those who so crave are blessed for they shall be filled with

Righteousness

something.

“Shall be filled” is passive. They do not fill themselves.

A lack of something, felt deeply, is stated to be a blessed thing, of itself. For it is certain that a filling will take place. The very craving is a blessing. For the presence of the craving ensures that filling will happen.

These have not done anything - at all. The craving is not self induced. They crave because of a lack. They shall also do nothing in the future for they shall be passive and yet be filled.

2. - Matthew 5:10.

Blessed are they which are persecuted for righteousness' sake: for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.

Some are persecuted for righteousness' sake. Jesus does not say they have righteousness or are righteous. Nor does he say they have done righteousness or righteous acts. Only that they are persecuted because of righteousness.

These, also, do nothing at all.
Others do something to them.

Because of what other people do to them, the kingdom of heaven is theirs.

Not will be theirs. It is already theirs. It belongs to them. Now. They may not yet possess it. They may not yet be in it. It is enough that they are persecuted for the sake of righteousness. The kingdom of heaven is theirs.

Righteousness

3. - Matthew 5:20.

For I say unto you, that except your righteousness exceed that of the scribes and Pharisees, ye shall in no case enter into the kingdom of heaven.

The AV inserts “righteousness” in italics after exceed. Jesus avoids calling what these men have by the word righteousness. Nevertheless it is clear that what they have is a substitute for righteousness, by context. And, previously, we saw that what they have is *apparently* a righteousness before men.

Some have a righteousness that exceeds that which is of the scribes and Pharisees and these enter the kingdom of heaven. It is evidently not the appearance of righteousness, for we have already seen that such a righteousness does not admit to the kingdom of heaven.

All that can be said of these, from this place, is that their righteousness - whatever it is - exceeds that of those who have an outward one that appears to men.

The least of these persons breaks the least commandments and teaches - men - to do the same. This behaviour does not exclude them from the kingdom. And a corrective to their behaviour - see below - is already in place to deal with their behaviour.

What a kingdom is this !

The greatest of these persons do and teach. *Them* is in italics; it is not there in the Greek. The word “men” is missing from this category. “They do and teach” is all that is written. That they do not teach *men*, in the context of the book of Matthew

Righteousness

and in the context of the immediate passage, would appear to suggest that they teach in the kingdom of heaven.

They do something, themselves, first. Then, afterwards, they teach it.

It is evident in the context that follows - *for* I say unto you - that these greatest persons do and teach righteousness. We know from another place, however, that whosoever shall humble himself, as a little child set in the midst of Jesus and his disciples, shall also be the greatest in the kingdom of heaven, Matthew 18:4.

These greatest ones who, in the kingdom of heaven, do and teach - righteousness - and humble themselves as a little child in the midst, are, Matthew 23:11, the servants of all the disciples.

Such servants shall do and shall teach and shall, thus, in their service, teach the above persons not to break the least commandments and not to teach - men - so. Thus the former breakers of the least commandments shall be well on the way to becoming the greatest, also. When they, too, can be servants to all.

This is, apparently, a kingdom of righteousness.

What a kingdom is this !

4. - Matthew 5:45.

Your Father... which is in heaven...sendeth rain on the just and the unjust.

It appears from this place that the just have not earned some

Righteousness

special earthly favour or some superior earthly advantage. God treats all men the same, on earth. If men think to earn superior material, earthly benefits from God by being just, they shall be disappointed.

The just, here, earn no such earthly superiority or natural favouritism from God by being just. But, still, they continue to be just and do not become unjust.

5. - Matthew 6:33.

Seek ye first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you.

Jesus here tells those who are his disciples that, if they seek first the kingdom of God and his righteousness, food, drink and clothing will be added unto them. Therefore, they need not be careful about such things. Nor need they care about the morrow, for the morrow will take care of itself.

This leaves them free to be wholly preoccupied with the kingdom of God and his righteousness. From other places, however, it is evident that the *manner* in which these things will be provided is not supernatural nor is it unfair in any way. Jesus himself was a carpenter and was subject to his parents.

When King Herod attempted to murder him as a child, there had, already, been gold provided as a gift by wise men from the East, such that Josphe was able to flee to Egypt. Later, when Jesus began his ministry and was, thus, not in a position to continue his carpentry, women ministered to him from their substance. It is a question of unnecessary preoccupation with these necessities.

Jesus does not tell them to seek anything that is in any way

Righteousness

connected with any righteousness that is attributed to themselves. They are to seek God's righteousness.

6. - Matthew 10:41.

He that receiveth a righteous man in the name of a righteous man will receive a righteous man's reward.

To be rewarded as a righteous man is to be deemed a righteous man. And to be deemed a righteous man, therefore, it seems that one only need receive a righteous man. Not go out and search for one; just receive one. Receiving is not doing. It is a gift.

7. - Matthew 12:37.

By thy words shalt thou be justified, and by they words shalt thou be condemned.

We finally see the righteous doing something.
They say something.

~ ~ ~ ~ ~

On this, seventh, occasion the righteous, having done nothing
so far,
open their mouths and utter words.
By these words are they justified.

~ ~ ~ ~ ~

8. - Matthew 13:43.

The righteous shall shine forth as the sun.

Righteousness

In verse 41 of this short passage, there are people who do some things. They do things that offend and they do iniquity. The Son of man sends angels to gather these out of his kingdom and they are cast into a furnace of fire where there is wailing and gnashing of teeth.

Here, Jesus does not state that the kingdom is the kingdom of heaven. It is evident from the twelve kingdom parables [see “The Glory of the Lord”, Belmont Publications] that the kingdom of heaven has an appearance that is greater than its true reality. The kingdom of heaven is “as” something and that something is greater in proportion than its true dimensions. Here, it is very clear that Jesus refers to the apparent kingdom, not the true kingdom of heaven in its essence.

Here it is revealed that within the apparent kingdom is the reality of the kingdom of heaven wherein the righteous may be found. They seem to have discovered an entrance to this real kingdom. But the outward kingdom is the apparent one. Ergo, the kingdom of heaven, in essence, has an entrance that is not apparent.

The entrance to the kingdom of heaven must be invisible, since it is not apparent. Now we learn that those who have an outward, apparent, righteousness before men may well be, apparently, in the apparent kingdom. The righteous are they who have found an invisible entrance to the essential kingdom of heaven.

The righteous are not said to do anything at all, here. Once the offensive, iniquitous persons are removed, the righteous shine forth as the sun in the kingdom of their Father. Once all that is only apparent has been removed, the reality becomes visible.

Shining forth is not doing something. The spontaneous display

Righteousness

of a glorious attribute requires no effort whatsoever.

9. - Matthew 21:32.

John came unto you in the way of righteousness and ye believed him not: but the publicans and the harlots believed him.

Jesus says, here, that publicans and harlots go into the kingdom of heaven. The publicans and harlots are said to have believed John the Baptist. By inference, in verse 32, the publicans and harlots had, first, repented, that is their mind had been changed - *metanoia* - by receiving the baptism that John offered.

Since these go into the kingdom of heaven and given what we have learned heretofore, we can see that these have something called, by Jesus Christ, "your righteousness" and that this exceeds that of the scribes and the Pharisees. By repentance and faith, therefore, publicans and harlots obtain a righteousness that exceeds that which scribes and Pharisees possess.

10. - Matthew 23:29.

Ye build the tombs of the prophets and garnish the sepulchres of the righteous.

The righteous shall rest in sepulchres which are garnished. Persons who have an outward righteousness which is apparent to men, shall be the ones who garnish the sepulchres of the righteous.

The righteous do not appear to be preoccupied with the garnishing of sepulchres.
Even their own.

Righteousness

11. - Matthew 23:35.

That upon you may come all the righteous blood that is shed upon earth.

The blood of the righteous is shed upon the earth, are the words of Jesus of Nazareth.

The highest earthly authority and the highest judicial authority was, at the time Jesus spoke, Tiberius Julius Caesar Augustus, the stepson of Octavian. Pontius Pilate was the Proconsul of Judaea, an office which does not imply a delegated authority but which conveys actual authority. That is, he is seen as the presence of the Caesar.

Matthew records Pilate's words for us. - I am innocent of the blood of this just person.

Matthew 27:24.

Nevertheless, it was a spear held in the hands of a Roman soldier, acting under the authority of the Proconsul who was the Presence of Caesar, which shed the blood of Jesus of Nazareth who had been declared a "just person" by the highest possible judicial authority at the time.

The blood of the righteous, truly, was shed on earth.

12. - Matthew 25:37.

Then shall the righteous answer.

Those who are called righteous are judged thus by the Son of man. He calls them this as a consequence of what they actually did - their actual works, which he, himself, witnessed. These

Righteousness

works were done to he, himself. This is the only evidence the Son of man brings on their behalf. Evidence of which he, himself, was cognizant.

The righteous would not have been able to speak on their own behalf, in judgment.

For they were not aware of the significance of what they were doing.

~ ~ ~ ~ ~

Thus, I have simply catalogued words relating to
righteousness in the Greek scriptures.

Then I have simply listed the occasions of their use by Jesus as
reported by Matthew.

And I appear to have found twelve occasions relating to an
effective righteousness.

~ ~ ~ ~ ~

I have looked into the word of God to see what questions are asked, therein, regarding righteousness and in answer to Job's famous question, How shall man be just with God ? I have listed all the Greek words associated with righteousness in the Greek scriptures and have then examined the places in which these occur in the first book of the Greek scriptures, from the words spoken by Jesus Christ.

This examination has answered the first two of the three questions layered within Job's query, How shall man be just with God ?

From the lips of the Lord Jesus himself it has been very clear indeed that man can appear righteous among men and can

Righteousness

thereby reach an elevated position in religion.
Shall man be just ? Yes, indeed.

But it is also clear from the words of Jesus Christ that some have what he calls “your righteousness” that exceeds this state and that those who have such enter the kingdom of heaven. Those who are judged righteous - by the Son of man, in judgment - enter into life eternal.
Shall man be just with God ? Yes, indeed.

Then, this being so, How ?
What is the answer to Job’s full query, How shall man be just with God ?

Looking again at the actual activities of those whom Jesus categorises as righteous, it can be seen that they -

- | | | |
|----|----------------|-------------------------------|
| 1. | Matthew 5:6. | Hunger and thirst |
| 2. | Matthew 6:33. | Seek |
| 3. | Matthew 9:13. | Respond to a call to repent |
| 4. | Matthew 10:41. | Receive a righteous man |
| 5. | Matthew 12:37. | Utter words that justify |
| 6. | Matthew 21:32. | Go into the kingdom of God |
| 7. | Matthew 25:37. | Question they have ministered |

They did not deliberately make themselves crave for something that is associated with righteousness. This occurred.

They did not, of themselves, seek the kingdom of God and his righteousness. They were told to do it. Then, they responded.

They did not repent of themselves. They were called to repentance.

They did not go and find a righteous man. A righteous man was received by them.

The only thing they appear to have done with regard to

Righteousness

seeking and responding is - receive a righteous man. Such as John the Baptist.

After the above four things happened to them, they did two things.

1. They uttered words which justified them.
2. Being now justified and, therefore, having a righteousness that exceeds the useless appearance of righteousness of men, they entered the kingdom of God.

Thereafter, when faced with the works which, in judgment, are highlighted positively by the Son of man, they seem inclined to dispute with his assessment - despite the fact that this is preparatory to them entering eternal glory.

It is blazingly evident to any but the most obtuse and bigoted that what is presented here is a way of righteousness that is in no way whatsoever dependent on the recipients of it.

To the third part of Job's layered question, How ? there is only one possible answer - God does it.

To this I add my own testimony. In detail, it is available from Belmont Publications. Here, I summarise it in six words. Prior to my activity, God did something - There was a man sent from God whose name was John, John 1:6.

As for me ? What did I do ? Six words :-

I received John. I made confession.

Righteousness

David's Blessedness

A Psalm of David, Maschil

*Blessed transgression forgiven, sin covered.
Blessed the man unto whom the LORD imputeth not iniquity,
And in whose spirit; no guile.*

That men make themselves, in appearance, righteous before men, we have observed.

That God is the cause of a man being truly righteous, we have witnessed. We have seen this from the record that Matthew gives us of what came from the lips of Jesus Christ, God's Son. We have also witnessed that such as these are judged righteous by the Son of man and enter into life eternal.

The blessedness of such a state may be seen in the Psalm of David, *Maschil*, Psalm 32.

Paul the Apostle tells us in Romans that, here, David describes the blessedness of the man to whom the Lord, firstly, imputes righteousness, Romans 4:6, and, secondly, Romans 4:8, will not impute sin.

David confirms all that we have, so far, observed in the book of Matthew. He of whom came Christ, who - yet - called him, Lord, testifies himself of the blessedness of righteousness saying, *Blessed transgression forgiven, sin covered*. That which is in italics in the AV, I have removed.

Not only is the transgression forgiven and the sin covered, they are no longer attached to anyone. Which, of course, they wouldn't be. As to the man ? *Blessed the man unto whom the*

Righteousness

Lord imputeth not iniquity. Again, there is a separation between the man and iniquity, for the Lord stands between, not imputing.

As a result, there is no guile in this man's spirit. He does not need to bother inventing the appearance of a righteousness before men, for the Lord, himself, has imputed righteousness to him, as Paul says, and does not impute iniquity to him. Again, the question arises - How ? How has such a man been so blessed ? That he is blessed is beyond dispute. But how ? As is plainly obvious in the passages in Matthew, so here. This man has done nothing of himself.

When I kept silence, verse 3. This man did nothing. He did not speak. No words came from him. But his bones waxed old through his roaring all the day long. What roaring ? Is he not silent ?

He roars, *sheagah*, within. All day long. So much so that his bones wax old from the incessant anguish in his soul. The Hebrew word *sheagah* is used seven times in scripture. Four times is it used of lions roaring. Once does Job use it, the man who asked, How shall man be just with God ?

For my sighing cometh before my meat, saith he, Job 3:24, and my roarings are poured out like waters. Sighing was more important to him than his food. His roarings poured out and left him dry. This was - inwardly - hungering and thirsting, of a truth. This was after God permitted Satan to afflict Job - before I was afflicted, I went astray - when fire fell from heaven and burned up his sheep and consumed the servants; when the Chaldeans formed three bands and fell on his camels and carried them away and slew the servants with the edge of the sword; when Job's sons and daughters, for whom he offered burnt offerings, ate and drank, as they were wont, and a wind

Righteousness

came and the house collapsed on the young men.

Job rent his mantle and shaved his head and fell down to the ground and worshipped and said, Naked came I forth from my mother's womb and naked shall I return thither: the Lord gave and the Lord hath taken away; blessed be the name of the Lord. In all this, Job sinned not.

Yet did Satan desire to prove Job: yet did the Lord permit it. And Job was afflicted with sore boils from the sole of his foot to the crown of his head and he scraped himself - having no servants left to assist - and sat down among ashes as his wife told him to curse God and die.

What ? Replied Job. Shall we not receive good at the Lord's hand and shall we not receive evil ? In all this did not Job sin with his lips.

Yet did he curse the day he was born and bemoan that he had ever seen the light of day that he should be brought to such trouble and that he should see such evil.

Then, he roared.

And then, as the book of Job reveals, did he go deeper than ever before in his own soul and make discoveries of himself that he had never found when in prosperity. And who did this ? Did Job plan all this ? Did Job search out a way to make soul discovery within himself ? Did Job know what lay within his own heart ?

He did not.

The Lord did this to Job.

Righteousness

We know nothing of Job. Nothing at all. Men can write what they like in speculation. But for all we know Job was a Tibetan herdsman or an Indian patriarch or a Chinese farmer. The language of the book of Job is such that no origin can be assigned. This book has nothing whatsoever to do with Israel, whether it occurred, or did not, within the boundaries of Canaan. This man could be any man. That is the point of the book.

God did what he did to Job for a reason.

And Job roared like a lion, hungry for its prey, the growl reverberating in his throat, throbbing through his lungs, thundering in his belly.

As did David. Like Job, David, for a time, kept this within himself - When I kept silence.

Not only did David roar within, in outward silence, but the hand of the Lord was heavy upon him. All day long he roared, but day and night was the hand of the Lord on the man. And heavy was the hand that pressed upon him, Psalm 32:4.

The effect of this was to turn his moisture into the drought of summer. Everything in David dried up. Within, it was like a parched field, dust blown and cracked, without a blade growing in the turned earth.

Other men, within, were full of hypocrisy and iniquity as they made an appearance of righteousness before other men, outwardly. Not so David. His interior was full of what God was doing to him, pressing heavy, drying up, causing a roaring.

Till David could keep silence no longer. Then he spoke.

Righteousness

And what did this man say ?

I acknowledged my sin unto thee, said David. And mine iniquity have I not hid. Unlike them that were full of iniquity, adding hypocrisy and an outward appearance of righteousness, this man hid it not - from the Lord - and opened his interior to the Lord's gaze, admitting that his inward parts were as they truly were.

I said, I will confess my transgressions unto the Lord, Psalm 32:5.

The words have hardly left his mouth, it would seem. I said I will... But, immediately his intention is stated, the Father is ware of it before he utters the content of his intention. The intention is enough. I said I will. Just saying, I will, was enough. And thou forgavest the iniquity of my sin.

Selah.

The Father is more ready to forgive than are his sons to acknowledge their need of it.
But the Father forbears, till the son is scourged suitably and knows his need.

So, tell me, who did all this ? David ? I don't believe so. The Lord did it all.

In Job and in David, is the work of God made manifest, in the Holy Ghost.

To every godly one is this extended by David, Psalm 32:6. They shall pray unto God in a time when he may be found for God, himself, appoints that time and God, himself, prepares them for that time. In a time of finding, says the Hebrew.

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The wrath of God is revealed from heaven upon all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men. But, now, David is, says Paul the Apostle, blessed with righteousness, without works. And now - says David the King of Israel, of whom came Christ - such as he, who, also, have been dealt with by the Lord in such a manner, shall be found godly. For so all - true - Israel shall be saved, Romans 11:26, as it is written, There shall come out of Sion a Deliverer, and shall turn away ungodliness from Jacob, for this is my covenant unto them, when I shall take away their sins, saith the Lord.

The Lord himself shall turn Jacob, and his seed, from ungodliness by pressing his hand sore upon them till they roar like a lion, hungry for its meat. He, the Lord, shall dry up their moisture within them. For it is the Lord who makes them to hunger and thirst after righteousness in a godly fashion. *He* turns *them* away from ungodliness.

Praise waiteth for thee, O God, in Sion: and unto thee shall the vow be performed, Psalm 65:1. It waits, until thy hand presses down; till the drought of summer is experienced within by thy winds in the soul. Blessed thou choosest, and causest to approach, verse 4. He may dwell in thy courts. None else do. The Lord does it all.

Before receiving this blessedness of righteousness without works, does the Lord do it all. And after receiving this blessedness of righteousness without works does the Lord do it all.

Saith the Spirit's voice to David, I will instruct thee and teach thee in the way which thou shalt go. I will guide thee with mine eye. David is to be alert, constantly, and, by the very flicker of an eye, he will know what to do. He need do nothing

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of himself. By seeing where this one looks, he will know what to do. That will be the way to go. The way of the Spirit.

And what must David do ?

Nothing.

Be ye not as the horse or mule, which have no understanding: whose mouth must be held in with bit and bridle lest they come near thee. Bite not at the one who leadeth thee and feedeth thee. Do nothing. Just receive. For this is righteousness without works. David had it when his words justified him. And when did that happen ?

The moment he said, I will confess. For in that very instant he was forgiven. All transgression was forgiven, Psalm 32:1, and all sin was covered to the degree that it was no longer attached. It was no longer imputed. It was no longer his and was viewed as though it never had been. Blessed transgression forgiven, sin covered.

This, says the Apostle Paul, is the blessedness of the imputation of righteousness without works, Romans 4:6.

There were seven occurrences of the Hebrew word *sheagah*, roaring; four were of lions, once in Job, once in Psalm 32. The seventh ?

Four times does the Holy Spirit make it clear that this word expresses what lions do over the earth in north, south, east and west. Such a roaring as this word expresses is heard only in these quarters. Such deep reverberations, such harsh growling, only ever comes from the throat of a hungry lion, frustrated as it hunts down prey, its belly empty, its eyes cold, its shoulders hunched. Yet another time, a potential victim

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swerves and bucks and leaps its way to freedom, escaping the savage jaws of the powerful beast. Then it stands foursquare on its mighty paws, lifts its angry head and *roars*. Nowhere else on earth will such a noise be heard. Denied of its meat it shakes the branches of the trees with its thunder.

No, nowhere else on earth will the sound be heard. But, within, in the soul of man, they shall rasp and vibrate deep in the inward parts. And the Lord shall hear such roarings. These are the roars of a man driven to extremity. These soundings are choice, to the Lord. In the mouth of two - or three - witnesses are such priceless roarings exhibited to us.

From on high, such roarings draw the attention of heaven. From a dead earth beneath nothing of note ever ascends that is worth anything from a dead humanity but such roarings. And, from his dwelling place on high, the LORD doth bend an ear. For here is a hunger. Here is a thirst. Here is an absence of righteousness.

He shall hear it in Job, whom he had permitted to be afflicted. And when those afflictions shall bear their fruit, there shall come forth from Job such expressions as, How shall man be just with God ? God shall hear those roarings in David when he presses his hand down on David, day and night, drying up his moisture till his soul is as dry as the drought of summer. And then shall David pray in godly fashion, at a time when the Lord may be found.

The seventh ? The third witness ?

The seventh occurrence of *sheagah* is in Psalm 22.
There also is this roaring heard.

My God, My God, why hast thou forsaken me; removed from

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helping me *and removed* from the words of my roaring ?

I have taken away the italics of the translators, rendered *rachoaq* as “removed” and added my own italics.

The first words of this psalm are those which Matthew reports were cried by Jesus, with a loud voice, as he was crucified. From the sixth hour - noon - was there darkness over all the land unto the ninth hour. And about the ninth hour, Matthew 27:46, Jesus cried *Eli, Eli, lama sabbachthani* ?

Mark reports virtually the same, Mark 15:34, except, of course, his precise wording - and lettering - is more suited to the purpose of his own book. “*Eloi*” - the actual speech of the Messenger of the Covenant who speaks the Covenant - is, in Matthew - whose record concerns the King of the Kingdom of Heaven - reduced to “*Eli*”, the original, scriptural wording in the Hebrew language from which came the dialect of the other utterance in Mark.

Because of what occurred in those three hours of darkness, Christ roared and cried those words. And because of what occurred in those three hours of darkness, both Job’s roaring and David’s roaring cease and they are blessed. It was God, himself, who caused them to roar. And it was God, himself, who ended their roarings and blessed them with the blessedness of the imputation of righteousness without works.

And it was God, himself, whose righteousness is that which is imputed to them.

This is the answer to How ? - How shall man be just with God ? God does it. Simply that. All that we can see more will only expand that statement.

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God does it.

It is God the Father who does it. And it is by the Son of God that he accomplishes it.

Not only does he impute righteousness, he also makes an everlasting covenant.

[Note: It is apparent that the English translations require some explanation regarding the words transgression, sin and iniquity in Psalm 32; and iniquities, sin and sins in Romans 4:7. I have set out in Appendix Three, at the rear of the book, what I hope will be some help regarding this.]

Shimei's Guilt

When King David's son, Absalom, conspired against David and the hearts of the men of Israel went after him, II Samuel 15:13, then David said unto all the servants that were with him at Jerusalem, Arise, and let us flee. As they fled, David and Ittai the Gittite, and the Cherethites and the Pelethites and all the Gittites, six hundred men which came after him from Gath, they passed over the brook Kidron - named eleven times in the Hebrew scriptures.

Ziba, the servant of Mephibosheth, met him and gave him provender, then King David came to Bahurim and, behold, thence came out a man of the family of the house of Saul, whose name was Shimei, the son of Gera.

Behold, says the scripture. Behold this man and what he does.

The grievous curses which Shimei spoke to David are recorded in scripture and there is no reason to record them

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again here. Abishai, the son of Zeruiah, wished to take off the man's head, but David said, Let him curse, because the Lord hath said unto him, curse David. Let him alone and let him curse, for the Lord hath bidden him.

Moreover he said, It may be that the Lord will look on mine affliction and that the Lord will requite me good for his cursing this day. As David spoke these things, Shimei went along the hillside, casting stones and dust, cursing as he went.

Once the Lord had delivered David and once Joab, the son of Zeruiah, had slain Absalom, David mourned for his son. Then he sat in the gate and all the people came before the King and they brought the King back. And he returned to Jordan and Judah came to conduct the King over Jordan.

Then came Shimei, the son of Gera, a Benjamite, which was of Bahurim, and he hasted and came down with the men of Judah to meet the King. Shimei fell down before David and besought the King that he would not impute iniquity unto him nor remember what he had done perversely that former day.

Because this man had cursed the Lord's anointed, Abishai, the son of Zeruiah, desired the man to be put to death but David required that no man should die on such a day, for, that day, he was King over Israel. And King David swore to Shimei that he should not die.

Thus David swore. And thus did he do. On that day, Shimei did not die.

His life was spared - on that day. But David said nothing about not imputing iniquity and Shimei, being spared his life, pursued the matter no further.

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No roaring seems to have occurred within Shimei that he found it impossible to live his spared life without forgiveness. David, who wrote Psalm 32, could not live without confessing his sins to the Lord and without obtaining forgiveness, from the Lord.

It seems enough for Shimei that his life is spared and that he should continue on earth and live his life without forgiveness. But his sin was still imputed. It still belonged to him and still lay, heavily, to his account.

Now the days of David drew nigh that he should die, I Kings 2:1; and he charged Solomon his son regarding Joab, the captain of the host, who slew more righteous men than himself, Abner and Amasa; regarding Barzilai to show him kindness; and regarding Shimei which had cursed him with a strong curse in the day he went to Mahanaim.

David tells Solomon that he swore to him that he would not put him to death with the sword. And David tells the son of David to bring Shimei's hoar head down to the grave with blood. For Shimei had cursed the Lord's anointed.

Touch not mine anointed, saith David, I Chronicles 16:22, and do my prophets no harm.

Those whom God anoints, publicly, and those whom God sets forth to speak for him, on his behalf, by prophecy - speaking as the oracles of God - are not to be touched or harmed. To do so, interfering with the word of God, hindering the work of God, is to invite the evident displeasure of God Almighty.

So Solomon called for Shimei and told him to build an house in Jerusalem and dwell there for the day he went out and passed over Kidron - note Kidron again - he was to know that he

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would surely die. Shimei agreed with this covenant and went his way.

But Shimei broke the covenant which he had accepted. This covenant promised life - but only if he kept it. He did not. And he died.

For after three years Shimei went to Gath to bring back two runaway servants. His servants meant more to him than his life and he paid for them with it, for Solomon was ware of it and sent for Shimei and faced him with his covenant breaking.

Moreover Solomon said to Shimei, Thou knowest all the wickedness which thine heart is privy to, that thou didst to David my father: therefore the Lord shall return thy wickedness upon thine own head.

The wickedness - *ra*, evil - in his heart was not brought before the Lord that it should be forgiven and cleansed. Create in me a clean heart, O Lord, Psalm 51. The iniquity was still imputed. Many have a stirring or two about their sins. But that is not the roaring that is felt when God Almighty presses his hand sore down upon a man, crushing his inner parts till he is truly humbled, really penitent, genuinely of a broken and a contrite heart, which condition God will not despise.

So Shimei had shrugged off the iniquity which was still imputed. Shimei had been willing to accept a covenant that depended on himself for life. And, in due course, predictably, since his heart was wicked, he broke it. Shimei had been granted space to repent. Time in which to consider his ways. Days in which to meditate on a covenant which required his obedience or, else, would require his death. But Shimei must have had other things on his mind. His servants, for example.

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Giving Solomon, wise man that he was, the just cause to do as David required.

Shimei's iniquity was still imputed. And Shimei died, unforgiven by the King, under the righteous judgment of the King. In those days, of course, God had a kingdom on earth under which men could execute such judgments, physically, on his behalf. Now, they occur in other ways. Upon those who blaspheme in such a way that Divine intervention is appropriate, it will fall. Those who harm the prophets of the Lord will be removed out of the way. Let men fear the Lord, and let men tread carefully when he speaks upon the earth.

As to Kidron, I said that eleven times it appears in the Hebrew. John mentions it one more time in John 18:1. Jesus went forth with his disciples and passed over the brook Cedron. The word for brook means "winter flowing", being more connected with weather than a quarterly time bracket. This was the brook that, if Shimei crossed, he would die. In the fields of Kidron were the vessels of Baal burnt in judgment, II Kings 23:4; the idol of Maacha was burnt at the brook Kidron, II Chronicles 15:16; this was the brook that David crossed as he fled from his own flesh, Absalom.

But the days come, saith the LORD, Jeremiah 31:38, that the city shall be built to the LORD. Then, the whole valley of the dead bodies, and of the ashes, and all the fields unto the brook of Kidron, shall be holy unto the LORD. It shall not be plucked up, nor thrown down any more.

All that is of death; all that is of the reign of the flesh; all the ghastly devastation of man; all the ashes of judged idolatry; all the judgments upon perverse cursers; it shall all be judged and left behind as Jesus takes his disciples over the brook with its cold flowings, John 18:1.

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He takes them into a garden. He enters into it. And his disciples. They enter after him.

All that Jesus prayed in John 17 could well have been prayed after his resurrection, as could all of John 13 to 17. All that then occurs from John 18:2 to John 20:1 could be considered to be in brackets.

Having entered “into the garden” we see him again, risen and a woman with him, “in the garden”. She supposes him to be the gardener.

A gardener and a woman, in a garden. He had taken everything, in himself, down into death in judgment. He had suffered in the hours of darkness, then given up the spirit and, dying, was buried. Touch me not, saith he, once risen. There can be no union, yet. He has not yet ascended. Ascended, the gardener is gone. Returned to the God who gave him. The woman is left alone. A bride, waiting.

He gathered everything up in himself. In suffering and death was judgment executed. And all is taken back into heaven, as though it had never been. Just a woman left who shall receive a Spirit within. For now the woman is clothed, the Lamb’s wife.

Revelation 19:8. And it was given to her that she should be clothed in fine linen.

The bride, as one body, is clothed in fine linen which is given. It is a free gift.

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Phinehas' Account

Psalm 106:30,31

Then stood up Phinehas and executed judgment: and so the plague was stayed. And that was counted unto him for righteousness unto all generations for evermore.

In Psalm 106:30, 31, we read some remarkable words. And these words begin to tell us the answer to Job's question. How ? How shall man be just with God ?

Here we shall see that Jacob, and Joseph, and Job, and Moses, and Phinehas will, together, teach us, in a mystery, what was kept hidden until, from the sixth hour to the ninth hour, all would be resolved and would, then, be revealed by Apostolic Authority - plainly and without dispute. From antiquity were there hints to be noticed. Seven times was it whispered. Now, we are witnesses of all that came before.

But these things have been lightly touched on in antiquity. There is a thread to follow, but it is just a thread. Force anything, and the the thread breaks. Let us go gently. Later, we can see the full revelation in Apostolic Doctrine. All will be fully plain. But, for now, let us follow this thread with a gentle touch.

In Numbers 25, we see some astounding words. Then, at that time, the revelation could not be fully expressed. It was expressed in terms in which it could be expressed, however. As with any depiction, figure or pattern, it is important to sift what is there. Nothing can be forced. Nothing should be overstated. What is gently given, must be gently received.

One man stood up and, through his actions, judgment was

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executed and the plague was stayed.
He dealt with the man.
He dealt with the woman.
He dealt with what would come from her belly.
And the plague was stayed.
Death ceased, because of what he did.
Unto him - because of what he did - was righteousness
counted unto him.
It was also counted unto all generations, for evermore.
It was counted unto him and unto all that would come from
him - all generations.
For evermore.

It was counted unto him. It was to his account. And to the
account of all that would come from him. For ever.

Through this “executed judgment” came an “accounted
righteousness”, Psalm 106:30.

And the LORD spake unto Moses, saying, Phinehas, the son of
Eleazar, the son of Aaron the priest, hath turned my wrath
away from the children of Israel. Wherefore say, Behold I give
unto him my covenant of peace. And he shall have it, and his
seed after him. Even the covenant of an everlasting
priesthood. Because he made a cover - *kaphar* - for the
children of Israel. Numbers 25:10 - 13.

To this one, of the priesthood of Aaron, was a covenant made
and to his seed after him.
And they would be an everlasting priesthood.

A priesthood.
A covenant.
A cover.
Executed judgment.

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Accounted righteousness.

The ceasing of death.

The cessation of all that came from the woman's belly.

The word "counted" in Psalm 106:31 - counted for righteousness - is *chashab* in the Hebrew. The word is used variously - houses are counted as fields, Lev 25:31; are we counted as beasts? Job 18:3; darts are counted as stubble, Job 41:29; horses' hoofs are counted as flint, Isaiah 5:28.

In passing, for just now, I say *chashab* means reckon. I prefer to wait until dealing with the Greek scripture to define the Greek equivalent to *chashab* more precisely.

One thing is reckoned as though it is another.

What was counted for what in Psalm 106 - in relation to Phinehas? "That" was counted, Psalm 106:31. And that was counted unto him for righteousness. That the plague was stayed is evidently not what was counted. That was not of his doing. The plague was stayed as a result of what he did. What he did was to execute judgment. That was counted to him for righteousness. One thing is reckoned for another. Executed judgment for righteousness.

The word in Psalm 106:30 that is translated "executed judgment" is *palal*. It is closely related to the word for a judge, *palil*. Young gives the alternative translation for *palil* as "sifter". Four times is *palal* used by the Holy Spirit in the Hebrew scriptures and three times is *palil* used. We are given seven occasions.

Palal is used other times in different forms with other meanings; in the Niphlal form and the Hithp form. But in the root form, it is used only four. Just as the word "well" can

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mean, in English, both in good health and also a hole from which to draw water, so also can the written Hebrew form of *palal* convey very disparate meanings. As the root form, however, and in context, it is clearly employed but four times.

There is a dispute about another occasion. Young queries the use of *palal* in the Authorised Version Hebrew in Ezekiel 28:23 and makes it clear that his opinion is that the word in the original in that place is *naphal*. I agree with Robert Young. I believe there are seven occasions of *palal/palil* and no more.

In Job 31:11 Job says that if his heart were to be deceived - *pathah*, persuaded, allured, enticed - by a woman, it is "an iniquity the judges".

If a man strive and hurt a woman that her fruit depart, he shall be surely punished, Exodus 21:22, according as the woman's husband will lay upon him; and he shall "pay as the judges".

Moses song tells us, Deuteronomy 32:31 that the rock of the heathen is not as our Rock, even our "enemies themselves judges".

Job, Exodus, Deuteronomy. Three times, *palil*. Let us sift.

A woman persuaded a man to an iniquity so great - the judges. The woman was deceived; the man persuaded. A man strove and a woman's fruit departed - the judges. The Lord himself shall judge his people, Deuteronomy 32:36. If I whet my glittering sword, and mine hand take hold on judgment, Deuteronomy 32:41.

As to the third, a glittering sword ? - Awake, O sword, against my shepherd, and against the man my fellow, Zechariah 13:7.

Let him who is wise, understand. Parables shall be revealed when one knows, personally, the one who tells them.

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Three times, now, *palal* :-

Ezekiel 16:52. Jerusalem, O harlot, verse 35, hear the word of the Lord. Thou which hast judged, *palal*, thy sisters - Sodom and Samaria - and yet hast not committed half their sins and hast thought it a light thing to be more corrupted in thy ways. Yes, thou - thou ! - hast judged. Yet shalt even thou be ashamed and I will establish my covenant with thee; and thou shalt know that I am the Lord.

I Samuel 2:25. If one man sin against another, the judge shall judge - *palal* - him: but if a man sin against the LORD, who shall intreat for him ? But the sons of Eli would not hearken, for the LORD would slay them.

Genesis 48:11. Joseph brought his sons out from between his knees to Jacob, as though no woman were involved and as though he gave them birth. Jacob judged - *palal* - that he would have seen Joseph's face no more. And why should he ever have done so ? Would it not be right that a man treated so by his brethren should, after being exalted to the highest place in Egypt, care no more for those who had sold him into slavery ? They all forsook him. No man cared for his soul. Jacob himself concurred with this judgment in his own thoughts.

The seventh is our text -

And Psalm 106:30, Phinehas executed judgment - a man and a woman and her belly.

Let us sift again :-

1. There was a certain one strove in a garden with a woman and all the fruit that could ever come from her departed. He

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shall pay as the judges.

2. Then a man was persuaded, in a garden, by a woman. This also, the judges.

3. Even though a woman unrighteously judge her heathen sister and her religious sister yet shall the Lord establish a covenant with her.

4. The heathen reign over the Lord's people when he judges them. Yet shall he avenge.

5. A man may be judged by a judge over the things of men. But who shall intreat the Lord ?

6. Though Joseph's brethren all forsake him, yet will he not forsake them. Yea, he will be their deliverer and children shall come from between his feet.

7. And to Phinehas, who exercised judgment, shall be accounted righteousness unto all generations for evermore.

Through Phinehas, the priestly son, was an executed judgment clearly demonstrated.

This judgment, if one follows the precise word used of it, covers six issues.

Within these six, is all that ever requires to be reconciled in judgment from the foundation of the world till its end. If these six issues be answered, righteously, in judgment; then all righteousness shall be, forever, satisfied.

Extend the "executed judgment" of Phinehas - by following the trail of the word through the Hebrew scriptures - and if all this that is visible is judged, then all righteousness shall be satisfied from the beginning of time to its end.

And if a righteousness, thus, be accounted, through the one who is both a Priest and a son, it shall be accounted to all generations, for evermore.

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This reference to Phinehas is truly stunning in its implications.

Abraham's Faith

It came to pass that there was war between kings in Abram's day - four kings with five. Abram took no part in all this for the God of Glory had appeared to him long time before and had said unto him, Get thee out of thy country, and from thy kindred, and from thy father's house, unto a land that I will show thee and I will make of thee a great nation. Moreover he appeared unto Abram again, after he was in the land of Canaan to which the Lord took him and said, Unto thy seed will I give this land.

Promised of God a land and a seed to inherit it, what need Abram to fight for anything ?

Until they took Lot, Abram's brother's son. Then Abram armed his trained servants, born in his own house, three hundred and eighteen and divided himself against them, he and his servants, and smote them, and pursued them and brought back all the goods, and brought again his brother Lot, and his goods and the women also and the people.

Then one king came out who had, also, not joined in this rebellion over a piece of earth - Melchizedek, King of Salem, Genesis 14:18. *Melek Tsedeq* - King of Righteousness. King of *Salem* - King of peace. This King brought forth bread and wine and blessed Abram and blessed the God of Abram. And Abram gave him tithes of all.

After these things the word of the Lord came unto Abram in a vision, saying, Fear not, Abram: I am thy shield and thy exceeding great reward.

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But Abram was, as yet, childless. And, as yet, he had not a single footbreadth of land to his personal possession. So God promised Abram, yet again, that he that should come forth out of his own bowels would be his heir.

But God did not stop there.

For we are not expected to have faith in that of which we have no cognizance.

Faith is not an emotion. Faith is not superstition. Faith is reasonable.

God *demonstrated* something to Abram.

And he brought Abram forth abroad and said, Look now toward heaven, and tell the stars, if thou be able to number them. And he said unto him, So shall thy seed be. And he believed in the Lord; and he counted it to him for righteousness.

After fourteen years, when Abraham was a hundred years old, Sarah, his wife brought forth their firstborn. And God tempted Abraham and commanded him to offer Isaac as a burnt offering and on the third day he stretched forth his hand to slay his own son. And God swore to him, In blessing I will bless thee, and in multiplying, I will multiply thee.

Abraham demonstrated his faith and was justified in so doing. As the Apostle James tells us, Was not Abraham justified by works when he had offered up Isaac his son upon the altar ? Seest thou how faith wrought with his works and by works was faith made perfect ? James 2:21.

A dead faith justifies nobody. But the faith with which

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Abraham believed was a living, vibrant faith. A faith that realised what he believed. A faith that laid hold and a faith that made invisible things real. A faith that justified God and a faith that actually *believed* God. Dead assent to technicalities cannot be called a living faith. Such a dormant entity is classed as dead by the Apostle.

Likewise the harlot Rahab showed a living faith. She had heard of the drying up of the water of the Red Sea for the people whom God favoured. She had heard what happened to the two kings of the Amorites on the far side Jordan, Sihon and Og, who were utterly destroyed, Joshua 2:10. She believed that the Lord, the God of this people, he is the God in heaven above and in earth beneath.

Not only so, but Rahab prayed the spies and required them to swear unto her that, since she had showed them kindness they would also show kindness to her father's house. And she required of them a token. A token of life for her father and her mother and her brethren and her sisters and all that they had and to deliver their lives from death.

This woman had faith and this woman used it and this woman compassed her own with it and this woman got a pledge with it.

For she had already, by faith, protected the spies. Carefully reading the text indicates how she worded matters to those who sought the hurt of the people of God. Just as a woman said that Ahimaaz and Jonathan were over the brook of water, when they were, truly, suspended over it in the well, II Samuel 17:20. As Jael told Sisera, Fear not, before she drove a tent peg through his temple. Nothing to fear, at all, Sisera. Come and have some milk.

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Faith will find a way. Faith works. Faith is effectual. Faith pursues. Faith obtains.

The Living God demonstrated something to Abraham. Abraham believed God - believed God *himself*, not assented to a technicality being true. And Abraham's works proved the reality of his faith. It was this *living* faith that God counted.

God counted *that* for righteousness.

The Apostles' Declaration

On the first month of the year, on the fifteenth day of the month - the day after the passover was killed - there was darkness over all the land of Israel from the sixth hour to the ninth hour. In this darkness hung Jesus of Nazareth who was crucified by the Roman authority of Pontius Pilate, Proconsul to Caesar Augustus.

At the ninth hour, Jesus cried with a loud voice and yielded up the spirit. And, behold, the veil of the temple was rent in twain from the top to the bottom; and the earth did quake, and the rocks rent; and the graves were opened, Matthew 27:50 to 53.

And many bodies of the saints which slept arose, and came out of the graves after his resurrection and went into the holy city and appeared unto many.

All these things occurred publicly. Visibly. Apparently. They were witnessed, recorded, documented, transcribed, published. They were *demonstrated*.

To Paul the Apostle, primarily, was it given to declare, in order, the profundities of what had happened, invisibly, in the three hours of darkness. To John, thereafter, was it given to

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record, in a different way - according to that ministry uniquely given to him, also - that which he witnessed both in sight and in vision. James, too, in his unique ministry, makes a declaration.

What they declare is more profound than seeing rocks split apart with internal forces. More soul moving than seeing a veil rend from top to bottom and feeling the ground shudder beneath one's feet. More awesome than witnessing earth part and graves gape open and dead bodies moving, stirring, rising and walking about.

Tremble, thou earth, at the presence of the Lord, at the presence of the God of Jacob, it was written of no more than an exit from Egypt, Psalm 114:7. What ailed thee, O sea, that thou wast driven back ? Ye mountains, did ye skip like rams ? Ye little hills, like lambs ?

And why, in the first month, on the fifteenth day, didst thou rend, ye rocks ? What ailed thee ? Why wast thou all a-quiver, thou earth which God did lay down, from of old ? Why didst thou tremble on that ninth hour ?

The evening and the morning were the sixth day, Genesis 1:31. And on the sixth day, from the sixth hour to the ninth hour was there darkness. And then a deep sleep fell upon him. And then a spear pierced his side. And when he arose, a woman was with him.

Why leap ye, ye that came out of the graves ? Why rise ye up ? Know ye that no such thing did ever occur from the foundation of the world till ye arose ? Who lay in death, in an open grave, and on the third day rose - why leapest thou ?

Come, see why. With reverence and godly fear, come, let me

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show you what angels desire to look into. Come, see what is declared.

First of all, Paul declares that the righteousness of God is revealed, Romans 1:17. It is revealed "from faith to faith". *Ek* - by, from, or out of, faith. *Eis* - to, or unto, faith. Here is faith. There is faith. From, or out from, this faith. To, or unto, that faith.

Secondly, Paul declares that the righteousness of God is manifested, Romans 3:21. Without the law, it is manifested by the law and the prophets. This we have plainly seen. What a manifestation !

Thirdly, Paul declares that the righteousness of God is through - *dia* - faith of Jesus Christ, to or unto - *eis* - all that believe, Romans 3:22. Just as, previously, it is from faith to faith. Evidently.

Fourthly, Paul declares that the righteousness of God is upon all - *epi* - that believe, Romans 3:22. From, or out of, and through, the faith of Christ; unto the faith of the believer; then upon *all* that believe. Individually unto; corporately upon.

Fifthly, Paul declares that justification is made freely; that it is by grace; and that it is through redemption - the redemption that is in Christ Jesus, Romans 3:24.

Sixthly, Paul says that God has declared his own righteousness in the setting forth of Jesus Christ as a propitiation. This propitiation is through faith. Faith in Christ's blood. This declaration concerns the remission of sins, Romans 3:25.

Seventhly, Paul further tells us that God declares his righteousness that he might be just and a justifier. The

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justifier of him which believeth in Jesus Christ. This *declared* righteousness justifies God in his justifying the believer.

For any man to justify himself by making a profession of Christ without understanding these words; for any man to blithely associate himself with Christ, without such an understanding, in the hope of being “let off” in the day of judgment; for any man to easily suppose that some form of “commitment”, some “decision”, some kind of emotional loyalty to an historical figure is, in any way, a means of justification is thoroughly, blatantly and impudently unrighteous.

This is the gospel of God concerning his Son Jesus Christ. This is the declaration of God’s righteousness. This is the sufferings and death of the Son of God. This - and only this - is a means of being justified from transgressions under the first covenant.

Any man who hurtles towards the day of judgment and revelation of the wrath of God without a full understanding of the gospel of God concerning his Son Jesus Christ is treating Almighty God with contempt and treating his own eternal destiny with stupidity.

This sevenfold declaration is the setting forth of God’s righteousness. That he might be, evidently, just. Without such a declaration, he is not seen to be just. Without an intelligent understanding of - and a vibrant faith in - this gospel, a man does not know the righteous God.

I speak from my own experience, that until I could perceive, for myself, that God’s righteous character was satisfied - in every way - with regard to myself, I was unable to have any peace. It was not a question of my own self preservation. It was not a question of my escaping punishment. My conscience did not wish to escape punishment.

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Until I could understand every matter that had been faced in righteousness; until my conscience was utterly at peace with regard to all that hindered God from a righteous expression of himself to the world, to mankind and to myself; until the gospel was clear - utterly clear, to me, I had no peace whatsoever.

Until I could perceive how God could be just - utterly just - with regard to my own sins, my own sin, the sin of the world, the sins of his people, the transgression of Adam, the resolution of all that was of the first creation - until I could rest in the full understanding of his justness, I could never be content.

I craved a full gospel. My understanding yearned to be filled with the knowledge of his truth, that I might rest in him, justified, and in the full assurance that he, himself, was absolutely at peace with regard to all his will and purpose.

This is what I call the gospel - the *euaggelion* - the evangel.

Anything less is not worth the name.

This gospel is the power of God unto salvation. To every one that believeth. That is, who understands it, believes it and *lives* in it. For the just shall *live* by faith. Mere assent to a technical appreciation of a system of doctrine will justify nobody.

God knew Abraham. Abraham knew God. They had a *relationship*. Such was this relationship that God tried Abraham and Abraham responded to the trial. And as a result Abraham's faith responded and grew and was demonstrated. And God accounted *that* to him for righteousness.

That kind of relationship.

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The kind that means something.

Such people as have this kind of relationship with their God will have this kind of relationship with one another. They will love one another, care for one another's salvation, travail in prayer one for another, weep over one another, rejoice over one another. They will break bread from house to house - not a meeting, but a meal at which they speak one to another of things that matter. They will desire one another's company to share the gospel and the fruits of the gospel together.

In short, such a people will be those disciples of Christ whom he commanded to, Seek ye first the kingdom of God and his righteousness. First before seeking what to eat and drink and wear tomorrow, that is.

Nothing brings this kind of behaviour in but love. For faith works by love.

To have such a faith as is the kind that God takes account of; to have such a faith that God regards as equivalent to righteousness; to have *such* a faith requires that love is the spring of it.

I love my God. And I could never be satisfied until I knew that he, himself, was utterly at peace with regard to my own salvation. Till his righteous wrath against myself had been properly, justly and justifiably appeased to the uttermost. Till I knew, precisely, how every righteous matter was fully resolved to his own satisfaction. Until I could understand and enter in to all that he had done - that I might rest in union with him in Christ.

As John Hooper's words are recorded on the memorial in

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Gloucester to his martyrdom by burning in 1555 - When I fully understood the truth, then I came to know the Lord aright.

If a man has no relish for the gospel, it is because he has no love for God.

To such a man would I say, lay down this book. Take up the book I wrote before it - The Beginning of the Gospel. Be not ashamed to go back to the beginning. Be not afraid to go back and start again. Be neither discouraged nor disheartened.

Rather repent. Receive the words of John the Baptist that prepare a way for the Lord. For I have come such ways. I have returned to that which was from the beginning. And the Lord has helped me. Why not you ?

My faith in Jesus Christ brings me into, and keeps me in , the presence of the Lord. By faith I find some place or other whenever need be, that I may pour out my heart and that I may be in communion with him who called me. By faith I am kept safe. By faith I am kept from falling back. By faith, when my feet collect grime from this world, I seek that cleansing from the Lord that proves I am his. Else I have no part with him.

I want to be one with my Lord. I live not alone.

Yet none of this is sentimental. It is by faith. I know him not after the flesh.

This living faith is the gift of God. It works by love.

It works. It is not idle. It is not dormant. It is not dead.
This is the faith that is accounted by God.

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This is the faith he reckons.

Imputation

Job enquires, Shall man be just ? We have seen, in Matthew, how men can be righteous outwardly, in appearance. Job asks, Shall man be just with God ? The very words of Jesus indicate that, yes, some are judged righteous by the Son of man.

Clearly a man shall not be just to whom the Lord imputes iniquity. Shimei has shown us that. He was unrepentant in his perversity. He died unforgiven. Such was the way he behaved towards the Lord's anointed that his life was brought to an end before his allotted time.

Job questions, How shall man be just with God ?

In answer to the question, How ? We have seen, firstly, in David, the evident blessedness of the man to whom God imputes righteousness without works. How ? By imputation, without the deeds of the law.

And what is imputed ? Abraham demonstrates it, primarily, by a visible faith, a faith that works. So does Rahab. The Apostle Paul declares that the righteousness of God is imputed to faith without the deeds of the law - Romans 3:27, Romans 3:28, Romans 4:3, Romans 4:4, Romans 4:5, Romans 4:6.

The Apostle James makes it abundantly clear that this faith is not a dead faith, James 2:17 to 26. This faith is a vibrant, active, effectual faith. It works; it is effectual. It demonstrates its own presence by its workings.

Abraham believed in hope - against hope. He believed in him who quickeneth the dead. He believed in him who calleth

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those things that be not, as though they are. He was not weak in faith, Romans 4:19. He had no consideration for either his own body, though he was one hundred years old, nor yet for the deadness of Sarah's womb.

Abraham staggered not at a staggering promise. He staggered not in unbelief; he was not overwhelmed by a promise that earthly man cannot comprehend. He was strong in faith. His faith had strength. Abraham gave glory to God, Romans 4:20, and gave no glory to man. Abraham gloried in his God ! This was a faith that was the gift of God.

Abraham was fully persuaded in his mind. He was not of a double mind, like a wave of the sea, swashing back and forth. He believed in his God, that what God promised, he would, verily, perform.

And *therefore*, it was imputed to him for righteousness, Romans 4:22.

No other kind of faith is a candidate for righteousness.

Those who had the *appearance* of righteousness, we saw earlier, did not enter the kingdom of heaven. It takes a *real* righteousness to gain entrance through this strait gate. Nor either, do those with the *appearance* of faith receive the imputation of real righteousness.

Real faith receives the imputation of real righteousness !
This is the faith of God's elect, Titus 1:1.

The scripture also shows that this faith is not indiscriminate. It is not an undefinable faith. Abraham believed God and *that* was counted to him. The true believer evidently believes in Jesus Christ for righteousness, for redemption, as a

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propitiation, for sin, for the shortcoming of a wasted existence, for the remission of sins that are past, for justification of both God and himself, and as the only one in whom the law can be, righteously, established. This can all be seen, in detail, in Romans 3: 21 to 26.

The true believer *believes* God for all of these things. The faith is vibrant. And God imputes righteousness to every one who believes thus.

Not the hearers of the word are justified. Be ye doers of the word, and not hearers only, deceiving your own selves, says the Apostle, James 1:22. We are of them, says the writer to the Hebrews, who believe to the saving of the soul - *eis peripoiesin*, unto the securing of the soul, Hebrews 10:39.

How shall man be just with God ?

By the revelation of the righteousness of God in the gospel, is how. By a vibrant, effectual faith in that gospel, is how. By the actual imputation, by God Almighty himself, to the individual soul, is how.

Those who hear only are not the justified. The justified are they to whom God, himself, imputes his own righteousness and, as a result, they receive the blessedness which David describes. The imputation of the righteousness of God brings a man into the very presence of the Father, through Jesus Christ.

And here, we take our shoes from off our feet. This is holy ground. And, once stood, by faith, upon it, we shall never move. Shoes will never be required again. They may be discarded.

Only now that we know what kind of faith it is that is

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reckoned; only now that we are aware it is a living, vibrant, effectual faith; only now we know that it is faith in the glorious gospel of God in which - alone - is true righteousness revealed; only now can we examine the word “imputed”.

To arbitrarily peer into the word imputation without such a faith is pointless.

The word used in the Greek scriptures regarding imputation is the word *logizomai*. This is the Greek equivalent of the Hebrew word *chashab* which we saw in Psalm 106 in relation to Phinehas. The word *chashab* has been translated seventeen different ways in the root form, six separate ways in the Niph form, ten alternative ways in the Piel form and once in the Hithp form. It is quite evident that the translators have not understood the basic concept of the word.

It is true that some of the variety of available English vocabulary is not as helpful as may at first seem the case, due to the duplication of concepts in words borrowed from other languages. English has duplicated concepts where the same idea has been expressed in words adapted from Latin, Greek, French, Germanic sources, Spanish and so forth.

Nevertheless, there is no real excuse for muddling the translation of highly important doctrinal references, especially when the very evidence of their application and their numbering indicates that we are to tread the more diligently.

The translators have not shown us the basic concept of the Hebrew word *chashab* by their extremely diverse renderings of the word. Neither have they exposed the underlying concept of the word *logizomai* in the Greek scriptures.

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The list of their attempts is as follows :-

Account 3; account of 1; conclude 1; count 5; esteem 1; impute 8; lay to one's charge 1; number 1; reason 1; reckon 6; suppose 2; think 8; think of 1; think on 1; be disposed 1.

Two other variants of *logizomai* are helpful.

It is clear that the word *dialogizomai* has the idea of casting back and forth in the mind or disputing back and forth with another about a subject :-

Luke 1:29; John 11:50; Mark 9:33; Phil 2:14; Luke 3:15; Luke 12:17; Matt 16:7; Matt 16:8; Matt 21:25; Mark 2:6; Mark 2:8; Mark 8:16; Mark 8:17; Luke 5:21; Luke 5:22; Luke 20:14. "Reason" is the word used in the AV, mostly, of *dialogizomai*.

Since the *dia* - across - adds the idea of back and forth, whether in one's own cogitations or between two disputing parties, then the word *logizomai* - *dialogizomai* minus *dia* - would be that activity - whatever it may be - without the back and forth element.

Analogizomai, Hebrews 12:3, is used by the writer to encourage thorough - and repeated - consideration of the contradiction - *antilogian* - endured by Jesus, the originator and perfecter of faith. Consider over and over this matter. Remove the repetition of *ana* and what does the *logizomai* portion of the word mean ?

There is one concept which is expressed, largely, in two different ways on the forty occasions in which we find the word *logizomai* translated into English in the AV. One way of expressing that single concept is the way of arithmetic. The other way is more basic. The word *logizomai* is derived from the word *logos*, of course. In this context, I would say it is logic, rather than word.

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Logos conveys both meanings - word and logic. It also conveys the meaning of utterance. The sum of all sensible utterance.

That which goes to and fro in the mind or between disputers, *dialogizomai*; that which, repetitively, one does in the consideration of the "antilogic" shown against the just as he is unjustly accused and punished, *analogizomai*; and that which is based on *logos* as one thing is viewed as another, *logizomai*.

Several of the renderings by the translators are in the realm of arithmetic or accountancy - reckon, account, number. Some meanings are vague, expressing thought of various, indeterminate kinds. "Conclude" is worth contemplating.

It is clear that we do not possess the word in English that we need.

Logic, we have; logical, also. But the verb does not exist and, instead, we have a variety of verbs related to numerical logic. This is not a numerical matter, but it is every bit as logical as the mental processes used in calculation.

Logicate is the word we need. And a perfectly respectable word it should be. The process of logic which does not lie within the realm of numbers.

Reason is the closest we have, but, unfortunately, the word carries connotations of adverse thought. They reasoned. It is inherently unpleasant, as generally used. Nor does it have the basis of logic to it. More importantly, from a translation point of view, both the origin of the word and the use of the word "reason" contain an element of motive to rational thought; a reason behind the reason, as it were. Logic conveys none of that at all. Logic is pure.

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To me, *logizomai* is to logicate.

The imputation of the righteousness of God is not based on favouritism. It is not based on sentiment. It is not arbitrary. It is nothing, whatsoever, to do with works, earnings, reward, debt or wages. It is nothing at all to do with moral ability.

The imputation of the righteousness of God is absolutely logical. God logicates righteousness in answer to faith. Is the faith there ? Then it is logical that the righteousness of God should be there also.

Abraham believed God. And it was logical that God saw his own righteousness upon Abraham. It would be completely unreasonable and illogical *not* to see it there !

Abraham believed God, that God would do as God had promised. Abraham believed that God was right to promise it; that God was reliable and would perform it; that God would not promise something that he could not do; that what was promised was not an unrighteous thing to promise.

Abraham believed God. And Abraham was right to believe God. And it was utterly logical that God should see rightness in Abraham.

David acknowledged his sin unto the Lord. David hid not his iniquity from the Lord. David confessed his transgressions unto the Lord. David believed that he, David, had no righteousness of his own. David believed that the Lord would justify him - in time, by his own means. David believed that the Lord would do so righteously and not in an unjust fashion.

David was right to believe all this.

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And the Lord saw rightness in him.

And how right was Abraham ?

And how right was David ?

They were as right as the God they believed in.

To them, was counted - logicated - the rightness of the Lord they believed in.

Can anyone call this unrighteous ?

What *may* be regarded as unrighteous, quite rightly, is the arbitrary assignment of an invisible and undiscernible quality to someone else. The mere transfer, possibly on the basis of some kind of favouritism, of an inherent and unapparent quality from one party to another party, in an invisible process that confers a valuable asset - albeit a spiritual one - upon a party who has done nothing to render them suitable to possess that intangible asset.

This is *not* what we are invited to believe in Paul's gospel.

Thank God.

But I have observed in my lifetime that this appears to be what a lot of people actually think. That God somehow transfers an invisible asset from himself to themselves for no reason at all and that he does it out of some kind of favouritism and it appears to leave them in exactly the same state as they were in prior to the invisible asset transference procedure.

Personally, I call that downright unrighteous.

The righteousness of God was *demonstrated* upon his own Son. *That* is what is accounted. And it is only accounted to

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vibrant faith.

The congregation of the dead cannot suppose themselves to be in possession of some kind of invisible quality that, on the day of judgment, will - invisible though it clearly is - be counted in their favour in some sort of parody of justice.

The Son of man shall evidently - by his own prior descriptions - judge men according to what can be *seen* !

And God Almighty, being declared both just and the justifier of him that believeth in Jesus, is justified in accounting his own *demonstrated* righteousness to those - and only those - who *actually* have a vibrant faith in it !

The Lamb's wife shall be clothed in fine linen which is given to her, Revelation 19:8. It is a gift. One righteousness clothes the whole body, Romans 5:18 - also by one righteousness [*dikaionatos*] unto all men to justification of life. All justified men in Christ receive of this one - demonstrated - righteousness. They receive it in answer to their vibrant faith.

Out of the faith of Christ - out of his obedience to the will of the Father - out of his yielding of himself by love - out of this there comes a demonstrated righteousness. That righteousness is the righteousness of God demonstrated upon his own Son in an executed judgment. By the offering up of the sacrifice there comes down the fire. And in the fire is the righteousness revealed. Once satisfied, the righteousness is at peace. This demonstrated, satisfied righteousness is *out of* or *by* the faith of Christ and *unto* every one that shall believe.

In answer to this glorious revelation within the gospel, faith springs up and responds to such a declaration. To such a faith is such a righteousness logically imputed. It is, then, *upon*

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every one that believeth.

From one, there comes down to all the body, that which clothes.

The coat was seamless - *arrhaphos* - and was woven - *huphantos* - from the top to the bottom. And it remained intact whilst he who was without it was affixed, from the sixth hour to the ninth hour in the darkness, as they gambled for it, John 19:23. My God, My God, why hast thou forsaken me ?

Why ? Because of what he bore. Who his own self bore our sins in his own body on the tree, I Peter 2:24. Because of what he was made. For he who knew no sin was made sin - sin itself. As such, he yielded himself to death, voluntarily expiring. Forsaken. Exposed in the bearing of sins. Exposed in sin bearing in death. Void of that which would turn away wrath. Without cover. No *kaphar*. But he, himself, would become the *kaphar*. He would become the propitiatory. For in him was all righteousness satisfied - once, for ever. He would provide *kaphar* for all the people. That we might be made righteousness of God in him. Only in him.

He is the mercy seat. And his is the blood sprinkled upon it. And within the ark was the the tables of stone. And, now, nailed to the cross is that handwriting of ordinances.

When the Lord sees the blood that was shed, he shall pass over - *pasach* - and shall pass on through, Exodus 12:12, 13. Mephibosheth was *pasach* - lame - in both feet, I Samuel 4:4. Hindered. Disabled. So, even the Lord of Glory is hindered that even such as he, in all his righteousness, shall not - *he shall not* - fall in wrathful judgment upon such as believe in the shed blood of Christ with a vibrant faith. Nay, he shall pass by, unable to find fault.

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Unable to judge - by sheer, absolute logic ! No favouritism. No sentiment. No worked up emotions. Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ and God himself, will - gladly - be hindered from any illogical wrathful judgment upon thee. Yea, he hath sworn it to be so and he will not repent. In blessing, I *will* bless thee !

Logic - living faith, working by love; logicated righteousness.

Then, the linen clothes were lying; yet John went not in. But Peter did and he saw both the linen clothes and the napkin as well - separate. Then John went in also - and saw, John 20:8.

And *then* he believed. When he saw the napkin separate, he believed. Saw what was intended to be seen. Saw what was *demonstrated*. The linen clothes - ready. Prepared for the body. The napkin in its own place. And he has witnessed to us what was *demonstrated* to him. He believed it. Shall not we ?

More was demonstrated to John, in the Island of Patmos, in vision.

And later he wrote of the Lamb's wife clothed in fine linen - given. A free gift. But he also wrote of the fine linen being the righteousnesses [plural] of the saints. To be so clothed results in a *demonstration* of faith which works by love.

This vision of righteousnesses should *never* be turned into a way of legal works. It is not. It is *demonstrably* not. It is the result and the effect of one righteousness.

His own self bore our sins in his own body on the tree, that we, being dead to sins, should live unto righteousness: with whose stripes ye were healed, I Peter 2:24.

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Shall his stripes not be enough to guide us ? Need we a law, too ? Need we to look forward to the day of judgment in a way which returns us to that old covenant which failed us - and we failed it - in the past ? Has Jesus not delivered us from the wrath to come - already ? And shall not love and faith be our path of righteousness ?

But when they see the Son of man on the judgment throne, none shall hide themselves in a cleft or in any other place, nor shall they be permitted to do so. They shall not soar to worlds unknown for it has been made quite clear that there is but one world to come. Before new heavens and a new earth are re-created out of the dissolution of the previous, there is a righteous judgment to be determined and nobody will be hiding anywhere, especially in sentiment or favouritism.

We shall all stand at the judgment seat of Christ to receive for the things done in the body. Some are prepared for such a judgment, and need not hide at all.

When saw we thee an hungred, or athirst, or sick or in prison,
Lord ?

Didn't even know what they were doing when they did such loving, faithful things, did they ? Didn't have to reason it all out about what they were supposed to do and how much and what it would cost and who was looking, did they ?

Just did it.

Such vibrant, loving faith just cries out for just judgment.
As does dead, unrepentant, unbelief.
Thus shall sheep and goats be separated one from the other.
By the evidence !

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For now, the wicked are among the just. Sometimes, as with Shimei, their wickedness is such that God takes steps to remove such appalling influences from among mankind. In olden times - when there was a legitimate kingdom on earth that was authorised to do so - it was by human means. Now that there is no authorised earthly administration which can, lawfully, carry out such matters, it is by angelic intervention.

Such as we see in Herod, Acts 12:21. Such as we see, betimes, around us. Such as I have observed during my own lifetime, on many occasions. There comes a point when men's outrageous behaviour will call for extraordinary measures that it may be demonstrated that there is a Judge who sitteth upon a throne in the heavens, especially - as I have observed - when the Son of God is being blasphemed publicly.

This is my beloved Son.

Such distinctive events are - wholly - in the hands of the Almighty. Otherwise, it is not right to want to be rid of those who have not yet obtained like precious faith for how does anyone know who shall be brought out of their bondage and deadness ? Or even from their blaspheming, as Saul of Tarsus ? Who can tell what the Lord will do in the future ?

Nor are tares are to be removed from among the wheat for men cannot discern which are which before the harvest, Matthew 13:24 to 30. Tares are to be suffered, for the sake of those who are not.

Men are to pray one for another, that all might be healed. Men are to do good one to another and to hope for mercy. God now commandeth all men, everywhere, to repent.

And why on earth should they not ? When such a glorious

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gospel is declared to every creature in creation. When such a demonstration of righteousness is revealed ! When such a propitiatory is set forth !

Come, buy wine and milk without money and without price.
Come, whosoever will, come - take freely of the water of life.

Without faith, however, it is impossible to please God, Hebrews 11:6. But in his Son he is well pleased, Matthew 3:17. Therefore, let us hear him.

Let us hear the evangel from his mouth who is the Messenger of the Covenant. And from the mouths of those whom he hath, personally, sent. And from none other.

Only one question remains. Out of all that is taught in the holy scripture - the God breathed words - out of all that is revealed of this glorious, freely given righteousness that is demonstrated upon the willingly offered sacrifice of the Son of God, manifest in the flesh; out of all that is made known of that righteousness being logically and righteously seen, by God himself, upon vibrant faith; out of all that comes just one pertinent question to the believer in Jesus Christ.

If this be true, that God so justifies a man -

Who is he that condemneth ?

The Paths of Righteousness

Condemned shall he certainly be, who believes on Jesus Christ who loved him and gave himself for him. But not by God, who gave his own beloved Son that all righteousness might be satisfied and fulfilled.

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Such a man shall be brought, by the working of the Holy Ghost within and by the providence of God Almighty and his angels without, to hunger and thirst after righteousness. At first, he will attempt an outward reformation, supposing that this will alleviate his conscience and imagining that this is what will satisfy the God who has begun to trouble his inward parts and to dampen all his joys and has blighted his worldly ambitions and has affected all his human relationships.

But the troublings and stirrings of the Lord will sink deeper and range wider such that no outward duties, no carnal performances and no brushing up of the exterior will suffice. From within shall his sore begin to run. His superficial ailments prove to have far more serious diseases as the cause of the symptoms that first troubled him.

Deeper goes the work of God, delving into every part of the man's soul and searching out every iniquity within. Back in time go the convictions of the Spirit, right back to his infancy and earliest memories, exposing the fact that, from his earliest consciousness he went astray. Nor are the piercings of the Almighty most sharp over what man is most troubled about. The Lord is a jealous Lord and the Lord will enquire what the man has done with his own Son.

The resistings of the Holy Spirit, the quenchings of drawings to repentance, the turnings away from a Saviour made known to all the world - these shall be the most shocking of this man's deepest recollections.

His awareness concentrates far deeper than all he has done to himself and his fellows in his indulgences, his selfishness, his wasted hours, his idle days - as he contemplates the fleeting moments of a life that ought to have been one explosion of zeal after a glorious God as his being hurled like one arrow of

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fixed intention, focussed on nothing other than the expression of the glory of God, to its single target.

The true reality of his very being and the nature of the God who created him become his sole preoccupation. This is the rule against which he sees his past and present life. Inevitably, he goes to the law to help him in a vain attempt to correct, now, what should never have been anything other than perfection.

Shedding the vanities of the world and its madness, the man becomes more serious in his demeanour, more solitary as he sits alone pondering his woeful life. But the law shall give him no help for, within, he knows that all his inward parts are rottenness. That which should have been a just and holy help to him discovers him to be what he really is. The law schools him, not in how he may find the God he has so despised in the past, but it teaches him his present depravity.

Such are the paths of a man when God takes hold on him.

God himself will teach, by many means within and by many providences without, and his teaching will be effectual. Such a man will come to hunger and thirst not after any means of his own betterment, for he will come to see the impossibility of any improvement of what Adam has passed on to him. Rather will he be made the worse for any religion he attempts to add to his sinful state.

He will come to realise that nothing - but nothing - can ever satisfy the righteousness of God for his past sins under the first covenant. He will understand, under the convictions of the Holy Spirit, that his debts are vast, that they reach to heaven, that not one single debt can be repaid by himself, and that he, himself, shall be faced with them in a coming day of

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judgment that cannot be avoided.

He will begin to appreciate that his obligations are absolute. The first covenant, to which he has an absolute obligation by his very birth, demands a totality from him that must be rendered. Failure is not an option.

Once, he may have had some profession of Christ which gave him a comfortable sense of being prepared for death and gave him a feeling of wellbeing when he compared himself with others. Now, he realises that every moment of every day is not his own. Now he becomes aware of obligations that exist according to his own existence. Everything he is, is for a purpose. And that purpose is to be fulfilled. Failure to fulfil that purpose negates the reason for his existence.

The appalling condition he is in is called unrighteousness. His past is not right. His present condition is not right. His mind is not right. His sensibilities are not right. His relationships are not right. His motives are not right.

This man will discover that nothing is right. Most of all and most importantly of all, he is not right with the God who created him.

Then - then - he will begin to hunger and thirst after righteousness.

Once a man really comes to the understanding that the One for whom his being exists is the One who is far from him, then he shall crave as he has never craved before.

Does God condemn such an appalling condition ?
Does the Almighty despise such a wretched creature ?

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No. Saith Jesus, Blessed who hunger and thirst the righteousness. For they *shall* be filled. Matthew 5:6, [EGNT].

Men may well condemn him, though. All kinds of criticism and condemnation may be levelled against those who condemn themselves and who, in their fleeing from a condemned city, expose the coming wrath that shall consume all who do not, likewise, flee.

Such as these shall be persecuted for no more than being receptive to the inner workings of God, the Holy Ghost. But such who are persecuted, being self confessedly unrighteous and hungering and thirsting after righteousness, are blessed.

For, Blessed who have been persecuted on account of righteousness for theirs is the kingdom of heaven. Matthew 5:10 [EGNT].

These heed the words of Christ that they should, first - that is first before considering what they may, or may not, eat and drink tomorrow - seek the kingdom of God and his righteousness. It is only sensible to do so. It is madness to do anything else. Matthew 6:33.

These respond to a call to repent, Matthew 9:13.
For these receive a righteous man, Matthew 10:41.

These receive the words of such as John the Baptist. These are the meek of the earth, who receive those whom God sends to guide them into the way of righteousness, Matthew 21:22. Blessed are such meek, Matthew 5:5, for they shall inherit the whole earth, once the wicked are severed from among the justified.

Once they have fully received the ministry of the Messenger of

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Preparation, they shall confess their sins and receive a baptism of repentance unto the remission of sins. They shall acknowledge, with David, their sin; they shall, like him, not hide their iniquity from the Lord; they will confess their transgressions unto the Lord, Psalm 32.

To these, and to these only, shall it be said, Behold the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world.

They shall behold him who suffered. They shall behold him who gave himself. They shall behold the only possible way of righteousness. They shall behold him who, made in the likeness of sinful flesh, and being thus made, was made sin - who knew not sin - and went down into death, condemned.

He was made sin, for us, that we might be made righteousness of God in him.

They will behold the Lamb whose vesture is dipped in blood. That we might be clothed in fine linen, as one bride.

They will behold him. They will behold him who received sins into himself. And suffered for sins in - in - his own body on the tree.

They will behold him who was, as the brazen serpent in the wilderness, lifted up. That they who have been bitten by a serpent may live.

They will behold all judgment executed upon him. All six judgments - the vast areas of judgment that must be resolved in righteousness.

They will behold and see of the travail of his soul.
They will behold and see that God is satisfied.

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34. Yet please the LORD was, him to bruise;
him put to grief did he:
when thou dost offer up his soul
he satisfied shall be.

35. When thou, for sin, shalt make his soul
an offering, he'll see
his seed, he shall prolong his days;
he satisfied will be.

from "Songs of the Witnesses"

And they, also, shall be satisfied.

Satisfied in conscience with the demonstration of all righteous
judgment executed upon the Saviour of sinners.

Satisfied in respect of every one of their transgressions under
the first covenant.

Satisfied in respect of the evident condemnation of sin in the
flesh, down to death and obliteration.

Satisfied in respect of Eve's deception, Adam's transgression,
the state of the human race and the action of the serpent who
precipitated it.

Satisfied in respect of one's own coming into existence in an
adverse creation that is contrary to its own Creator.

Satisfied in respect of one's own part in a world which is at
enmity with all that is of God.

Satisfied in respect of a law that is magnified, made
honourable, then, through death, one is lawfully removed
from under its realm.

Satisfied in respect of God's own righteous character that he,
himself, is satisfied and that he, himself, through his own Son,
has resolved every righteous issue with regard to the world,
with regard to himself, with regard to every moral and

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spiritual issue.

Satisfied shall he be who beholds the Lamb of God by faith.

Such a one will not only confess iniquity, transgressions and sin to the Lord, he shall also call upon the name of the Lord for salvation. And, receiving such a salvation, he shall, in faith, confess among men the name of Jesus Christ to the glory of God and the Father, owning that all righteousness belongeth unto the Lord.

By such words will a man, evidently, show that he has been graced with the faith that is reckoned by God and with the faith that God accounts as righteousness. This is downright logical.

By such words will a man be justified, Matthew 12:37.

And by such words will a man demonstrate what occurred in the three hours of darkness from the sixth hour to the ninth hour. A man will demonstrate God's righteousness by declaring what he *believes in* for his own justification. He will demonstrate what God did in secret in the darkness. He will justify God that God will be *seen* to be just. God will be seen to be the justifier by the evident blessedness of the man who thus declares a living faith. And God will be *seen* to be just by the intelligent faith of the man who believes this glorious gospel.

Hand in hand shall such a man go with his God. This is no dead assent to dry facts kept in a dusty cupboard of the memory to be dragged out, betimes, like the fancy crockery when guests arrive. This is what makes the man's heart beat. This is what makes his mind expand. This is what he *lives* for !

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For the just shall *live* by his faith !

They to whom righteousness is reckoned, by logic, by God himself, shall, in turn, reckon themselves - *logizomai* - by logical faith, to be dead indeed unto sin, but alive unto God through Jesus Christ our Lord. These are enjoined by the Apostle Paul to yield no more their members as instruments of unrighteousness: but to yield themselves unto God.

No more are they to be the master of themselves, deliberately yielding their members as sin moves them. Dead to sin, they rather yield their self. Yielding self, itself, as alive from the dead, they also yield their members as instruments of righteousness unto God.

By such a strait gate shall a man enter the kingdom of heaven, Matthew 21:32. He shall strive to enter an invisible gate, for he cares not to make an appearance of righteousness, outwardly, to men. No, his whole being agonises to pass through an invisible entrance.

He leaves behind all hindrance. He sheds all that inhibits. He forsakes all - and he must, for this is an invisible gate - to follow Christ. For Christ is not known after the flesh but after the Spirit. He that thus strives shall find that, as he proceeds, all that is of the first creation is left behind. Nothing gets through this strait gate and down this restrictive, narrow way but - but what ?

Only he knows who has succeeded in passing through.

I am crucified with Christ: nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me, Galatians 2:20. And the life that I now live, I live by the faith of Jesus Christ, who loved me and gave himself for me.

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In the love of which Paul speaks in Galatians 2:20, will a man love them that have so passed from death unto life. He shall not be able to help himself from helping them. Without a thought shall he, faithfully, care for them, protect them, encourage them, exhort them, assist them, serve them and rejoice in them.

When saw we thee, Lord ? shall he say, flabbergasted, Matthew 25:37.

To such, the Lord is a shepherd.
Such as these, he leadeth in paths of righteousness, Psalm 23.
They shall fear no evil.

The Righteousness of God

And of the Righteousness of God, what shall we say ?

In olden time, the law and the prophets witnessed - *marturia* - to its existence, Romans 3:21. Evidently so to anyone who reads them. Now, in Paul's gospel, it is manifested without the law, Romans 3:21, again. Manifested - *phaneroo* - by preaching, yes.

But now, also, is the righteousness of God revealed to faith. It is revealed - *apokalupto* - to every one who believeth in God who justifieth the ungodly. Inasmuch as waves cover - *kalupto* - a boat, Matthew 8:24; inasmuch as mountains, falling upon men, will hide - *kalupto* - them, Luke 23:30. By so much is the righteousness of God uncovered - *apokalupto* - out of the faith of Christ unto the faith of the roaring, repentant, confessing sinner who hungers and thirsts after such a justifying, divine, righteousness.

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Inasmuch as one could reveal a boat under tempestuous seas as it buries itself beneath the waves; inasmuch as could one remove a mountain to reveal whom it had fallen upon - by so much is the uncovering revelation made to vibrant, yearning, pulsing faith of the righteousness of God, which, freely, by grace, is unto and upon every one who responds by heartfelt, love-gendered faith to the glorious gospel of the Blessed God.

The righteousness of God is a justifying righteousness. The characteristic of this righteousness is that it justifies. The demonstration of this justifying righteousness is that it condemns the one who offered himself up on behalf of all. This kind of righteousness is the kind that makes him, who yielded himself up, to be sin, who knew not sin. This righteousness is that which obtained the whole field in order to get the treasure in the field. This righteousness is revealed in a gospel that is made known to every creature under the whole of heaven, upon the entire earth. This righteousness sends a man, whose name is John, unto men that they might repent, and that they might be prepared in readiness for the coming of the one of whom it shall, then, be said, Behold the Lamb of God.

Those who refuse to repent under the ministry of the man whom God sends, remain unrepentant. Those who believe not, believe not in God, who justifieth the ungodly. Those who are condemned, are condemned out of their own mouths.

Those who spurn a way of repentance and faith, remain outside the kingdom of heaven.

These have no righteousness.

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The Kingdom of Heaven

As to the kingdom into which those enter who have obtained a righteousness that exceeds that of an apparent righteousness that is outward before men, we may see it plainly in the Acts of the Apostles, set forth in demonstrated examples. Here, Grace reigns, through righteousness, unto eternal life by Jesus Christ our Lord, Romans 5:21.

That which is outwardly apparent to men is conspicuously absent, particularly with regard to two definite things.

Some items being sold - land and houses above what was needed for personal requirement - the price of them was laid at the feet of the apostles and distribution was made to all, as they had need. Once done, it did not need to be repeated and this subject is not raised again, Acts 4:34, 35. For none lacked, after that. For these had voluntarily, gladly, and unitedly chosen to forfeit their own little kingdoms on earth and to, wholeheartedly, yield up all for the sake of the kingdom of heaven.

Thus for the first thing.

In Jerusalem, we find eleven men abiding together, peaceably and in co-operation. In a single, upper room. They continued, with one accord, in prayer and supplication. Women were present when they prayed together, as were certain other men.

In Thessalonica certain people desired to bring out Jason's household but, being unable to find them, they appear to have assaulted his house instead, then physically dragged Jason to Court.

In Damascus, we find Saul of Tarsus in the street called Straight in the house of one Judas who gave hospitality to Saul.

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Saul was blind at the time and was there praying.

In Joppa, we find Simon Peter in a house. It belonged to one Simon, a tanner, who was giving hospitality to Peter. Peter is praying on the roof.

In Jerusalem we find Peter knocking at the door of a house after an angel released him from prison. James had just been killed by the sword of Herod. It was Mary's house, the mother of John Mark. Rhoda is there, too. She fails to let Peter in, at first. There are people, gathered hospitably. They are within, praying, for Peter.

Hospitality and prayer in private residences, with persecution.

In Corinth we find Paul enjoying hospitality in the house of one Justus who worshipped God, whose house joined hard by the synagogue. But Paul had shaken his garments and left the synagogue and abode in Corinth - presumably with Justus next door to the synagogue - for eighteen months, teaching the word of God among them.

In Philippi, we find Lydia, a seller of purple who attended unto the things which were spoken of Paul and she besought them who had so ministered to abide there. And she constrained them so, with gracious hospitality. They abode there for a time, ministering the word.

In Caesarea, Philip the evangelist had a house. And he had four daughters, all virgins, who prophesied. Paul was hospitably entertained there and so was Agabus, a prophet.

In Rome, as the book of Acts closes, we see Paul dwelling two whole years in his own rented house - waiting to be brought before Caesar for daring to preach the gospel in Jerusalem; hospitably receiving all that came to him, preaching the kingdom of God, and teaching those things which concern the Lord Jesus Christ

People in private houses, showing hospitality one to another

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and being occupied with the word - with the things that concern the Lord Jesus Christ.

And we read the words of Stephen, in his last words on this earth before they picked up stones to stone him - Heaven is my throne, and earth is my footstool: what house will ye build me ? saith the Lord. Or what is the place of my rest ? Hath not my hand made all these things ?

Thus for the second thing. Two things that God does not need and does not require.

As for the two things he does require ?

Seek ye first the kingdom of God and his Righteousness.

Nigel Johnstone

Malvern, august 2012.

Righteousness

Appendix One - Greek Words Associated with Righteousness

Dikaiousune - Righteousness 94

Dikaio - Just 25; Meet 2; Right 5; Righteous 41; Right'sness 3

Dikaioo - Free 1; Justify 37; Justifier 1; (Be) Righteous 1

Dikaiosis - Justification 2

Dikaiomai - Judgment 2; Justification 1; Ordinance 3;

Righteousness 4

Dikaiokrisia - Righteous judgment 1

Dikastes - Judge 3

Dike - Judgment 1; Vengeance 2

Endikos - Just 2

Adikos - Unjust 8; Unrighteous 4; Wrongfully 1

Adikeo - Be an offender 8; Be unjust 2; Do wrong 8; Hurt 10;

Injure 1; Wrong 3

Adikia - Iniquity 6; Unrighteousness 16; Unjust 2; Wrong 1

Adikema - Evil doing 1; Iniquity 1; Wrong 1

Antidikos - Adversary 5

Logizomai - Account 3; Account of 1; Conclude 1; Count 5;

Esteem 1; Impute 8; Lay to charge 1; Number 1; Reason 1;

Reckon 6; Suppose 2; Think 8; Think of 1; Think on 1; Be disposed 1

Dialogizomai - Cast in the mind 1; Consider 1; Dispute 1; Muse 1; Reason 11; Think 1

Analogizomai - Consider 1

Dialogismos - Disputation 1; Disputing 1; Doubting 1;

Imagination 1; Reasoning 1;

Thought 9

Paralogizomai - Beguile 1; Deceive 1

Pithanologia - Persuasive appeal 1

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Appendix Two - Righteousness in Matthew

1:19 - Joseph a just man
3:15 - becometh us to fulfil all R
5:6 - hunger and thirst after R
5:10 - persecuted for R
5:20 - except your R exceed
5:45 - rain on just
5:45 - rain on unjust
6:33 - kingdom of God and his R
9:13 - not come to call the R
10:41 - receiveth a R man
10:41 - in the name of a R man
10:41 - a R man's reward
11:19 - wisdom is justified
12:7 - condemn the guiltless
12:37 - by thy words, justified
12:37 - by thy words, condemned
13:17 - many prophets and R men
13:43 - the R shine forth as the sun
13:49 - sever wicked from among the just
20:4 - whatever is right
20:7 - whatever is right
21:32 - John came in the way of R
23:28 - outwardly appear R
23:29 - sepulchres of the R
23:35 - R blood shed upon earth
25:37 - then shall the R answer
25:66 - the R unto life eternal
27:19 - that just man
27:24 - innocent of the blood of this just person

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Appendix Three

Words used for sin etc in Psalm 32 and Romans 4.

Psalm 32, A Psalm of David, Maschil.

Blessed *pesha nasa, chataah kasah*. [Blessed transgression forgiven, sin covered]

Blessed the man unto whom the LORD *chasab* not *avon*. [imputeth not iniquity]

I *yada* my *chattath* unto thee, [I acknowledged my sin unto thee]

And mine *avon* have I not *kasah*. [iniquity have I not hid]

I said, I will *yadah* my *pesha* unto the LORD; [confess my transgressions]

And thou *nasa* the *avon* of my *chattath*. [forgavest the iniquity of my sin]

Romans 4:7

Blessed are they whose *anomia* are *aphesis*, [iniquities are forgiven]

And whose *hamartia* are *epikalupto*. [sins are covered]

Blessed the man to whom the Lord will not *logizomai hamartia*. [impute sin]

Paul's Translations

Paul translates *nasa* with *aphesis*

Both are translated forgiven [Young]

Aphesis is also translated remitted [AV]

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Paul translates *pesha* with *anomia*.

Pesha is revolt, rebellion or stepping over. [Young]

That is, the deliberate crossing of a boundary.

Anomia is lawlessness. *Nomia* is law.

Then Paul translates *chataah* with *hamartia*.

Finally, Paul translates *chasab* not *avon* with not *logizomai* *hamartia*.

Chasab and *logizomai* are variously translated reckon, impute, account

Avon is perversity [Young]

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