

“Lead Me in the Paths of Righteousness”

Righteousness Vs. Pseudo-Righteousness

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RIGHTEOUSNESS IS ONE OF THOSE BIBLICAL WORDS THAT can mean a lot of things to a lot of people. Often righteousness is defined more by the traditions of the churches or religious movement we are a part of (e.g., don't lie, steal, commit adultery, drink alcohol, dance, play cards, smoke, etc.) than by what the Word of Elohim actually teaches. Have you wondered what the word *righteousness* really means?

In this study, we have attempted to look up nearly all 297 references in Scripture to righteousness, then list the main scriptures that capture the quintessential meaning of *righteousness* and then categorize them topically. By this means, we hope to let the Bible itself define *righteousness* instead of men's traditions and religious philosophies.

It behooves us to know what *righteousness* is, since Yeshua declared that those who hunger and thirst for righteousness will be filled, and that those who are persecuted for righteousness' sake will inherit the kingdom of heaven (Matt 5:6 and 10). Additionally, he commands us to “seek first the kingdom of Elohim and his righteousness” (Matt 6:33). Elsewhere the Scriptures tell us that “the unrighteous will not inherit the kingdom of Elohim” (1 Cor 6:9). Yeshua also taught that it was necessary for the righteousness of his disciples (and us) to exceed that of the scribes and Pharisees (Matt 5:20). What did he mean by this? And finally, in Revelation 19:7-9 the bride of Yeshua is described as wearing “fine linen, clean and bright” garments which is “the **righteous acts** of the saints” (NKJV). Notice it doesn't say “righteous **beliefs**,” but righteous **acts**.” What are the *righteous acts* of the saints?

The Etymology of the Word Righteousness

Let's first define the word *righteousness*.

It is the Hebrew word *tsedawkaw* (*Strong's* H6666 and is derived from H6663; *TWOT* 1879b) and means “justice, truthfulness, ethically right” or “morally straight.” The KJV translates *tsedawkaw* as follows: righteousness (128 times), justice (15 times), right (9 times), righteous acts (3 times), moderately (1 time), righteously (1 time).

Tsedawkaw derives from *tsadak* (a primitive root; *Strong's* H6663) meaning “to be just, be righteous, to have a just cause, to be in the right, to be righteous in conduct and character, to be put or made right or justified, to make someone righteous, to do or bring justice, to vindicate the cause of, to save, to turn to righteousness.” It is translated in the KJV as justify (23 times), righteous (10 times), just (3 times), justice (2 times), cleansed (1 time), clear ourselves (1 time), righteousness (1 time).

According to the *Theological Wordbook of the Old Testament (TWOT)*, *tsedawkaw* basically connotes conformity to an ethical or moral standard. The original meaning of the word is likely to have been “to be straight” and evolved into meaning “a norm.” *Sedeq* now refers to an ethical, moral standard and of course in the Hebrew Scriptures (Tanakh or OT) that standard is the nature and will of Elohim. He is righteous and all that he does is righteous (Ps 145:17).

Now let's allow the Word of Elohim to speak for itself to tell us plainly just *what righteousness is*.

YHVH Promises to Lead Us in His Paths of Righteousness

- Ps 23:3, He restoreth my soul: he leadeth me in the paths of righteousness for his name's sake.

Righteousness Comes From and Is an Attribute of YHVH

- Ps 35:28, And my tongue shall speak of thy righteousness and of thy praise all the day long.

- Ps 36:6, Thy righteousness is like the great mountains; thy judgments are a great deep: O YHVH, thou preservest man and beast.
- Ps 36:10, O continue thy lovingkindness unto them that know thee; and thy righteousness to the upright in heart.
- Isa 54:17, No weapon that is formed against thee shall prosper; and every tongue that shall rise against thee in judgment thou shalt condemn. This is the heritage of the servants of YHVH, and their righteousness is of me, saith YHVH.
- Jer 23:6, In his days Judah shall be saved, and Israel shall dwell safely: and this is his name whereby he shall be called, YHVH Our Righteousness.
- Jer 33:15, In those days, and at that time, will I cause the Branch of righteousness to grow up unto David; and he shall execute judgment and righteousness in the land.
- Jer 33:16, In those days shall Judah be saved, and Jerusalem shall dwell safely: and this is the name wherewith she shall be called, YHVH our righteousness.
- Rev 19:11, And I saw heaven opened, and behold a white horse; and he that sat upon him was called Faithful and True, and in righteousness he doth judge and make war.

Righteousness Is an Attribute of Redeemed Israelites

- Jer 33:16, In those days shall Judah be saved, and Jerusalem shall dwell safely: and this is the name wherewith she shall be called, YHVH our righteousness.
- Rev 19:8, And to her was granted that she should be arrayed in fine linen, clean and white: for the fine linen is the righteousness [or “righteous deeds” — NIV, NAS] of saints.

The Torah Defines Righteousness; Torah and Righteousness Go Hand-in-Hand

The Torah — a biblical Hebrew word meaning “instructions, precepts and teachings” — is the word usually translated as “law” in our English Bibles, and refers to the instructions or laws of Elohim as given to the servants of YHVH in the first five books of the Bible.

- Ps 119:172, My tongue shall speak of thy word: for all thy [Torah] commandments are righteousness.
- Isa 42:21, YHVH is well pleased for his righteousness’ sake; he will magnify the Torah, and make it honourable [Heb. great, majestic, wide, noble].

This is likely a prophecy about the coming of the Renewed Covenant, the Messiah and the outpouring of the Set-Apart Spirit of YHVH upon men, which would enable men to keep *both* the letter and the spirit of the Torah from a circumcised heart *through* the supernatural power of the resurrected Yeshua by his Spirit. All of this was necessary because of ancient Israel’s disobedience to and inability to keep Torah (Isa 42:24).

- Isa 51:7, Hearken unto me, ye that know righteousness, the people in whose heart is my Torah; fear ye not the reproach of men, neither be ye afraid of their revilings.
- Matt 5:20, For I say unto you, That except your righteousness shall exceed the righteousness of the scribes and Pharisees, ye shall in no case enter into the kingdom of heaven. (See vv. 17–19 for context.)
- Heb 5:12–14, For when for the time ye ought to be teachers, ye have need that one teach you again which be the first principles of the oracles of Elohim [i.e., the Torah]; and are become such as have need of milk, and not of strong meat. For every one that useth milk is unskillful in the word of righteousness [i.e., the Torah]: for he is a babe. But strong meat belongeth to them that are of full age, even those who by reason of use have their senses exercised to discern both good and evil [the Torah tells us the difference between good and evil].

Righteousness (Torah-Obedience) Is the Antithesis of Wickedness (Sin or Torahlessness)

- Ps 45:7, Thou lovest righteousness, and hatest wickedness: therefore Elohim, thy Elohim, hath anointed thee with the oil of gladness above thy fellows.

The Torah defines both what is good and evil, and it specifies curses for those who do wickedly and walk contrary to YHVH’s instructions and blessings upon those who follow them.

- Isa 1:21, How is the faithful city become an harlot! It was full of judgment; righteousness lodged in it; but now murderers.
- Ezek 3:20, Again, When a righteous man doth turn from his righteousness, and commit iniquity, and I lay a stumblingblock before him, he shall die: because thou hast not given him warning, he shall die in his sin, and his righteousness which he hath done shall not be remembered; but his blood will I require at thine hand.
- Ezek 18:20, The soul that sinneth, it shall die. The son shall not bear the iniquity of the father, neither shall the father bear the iniquity of the son: the righteousness of the righteous shall be upon him, and the wickedness of the wicked shall be upon him.
- Ezek 18:24, But when the righteous turneth away from his righteousness, and committeth iniquity, and doeth according to all the abominations that the wicked man doeth, shall he live? All his righteousness that he hath done shall not be mentioned: in his trespass that he hath trespassed, and in his sin that he hath sinned, in them shall he die.
- Ezek 18:26, When a righteous man turneth away from his righteousness, and committeth iniquity, and dieth in them; for his iniquity that he hath done shall he die.
- Ezek 33:12, Therefore, thou son of man, say unto the children of thy people, The righteousness of the righteous shall not deliver him in the day of his transgression: as for the wickedness of the wicked, he shall not fall thereby in the day that he turneth from his wickedness; neither shall the righteous be able to live for his righteousness in the day that he sinneth.
- Dan 4:27, Wherefore, O king, let my counsel be acceptable unto thee, and break off thy sins by righteousness, and thine iniquities by shewing mercy to the poor; if it may be a lengthening of thy tranquillity.
- Heb 1:9, Thou hast loved righteousness, and hated iniquity; therefore Elohim, even thy Elohim, hath anointed thee with the oil of gladness above thy fellows.

Righteousness (Torah-Obedience) Keeps One in the Way (Torah-Path) of Elohim

- Prov 13:6, Righteousness keepeth him that is upright in the way: but wickedness overthroweth the sinner.

One Must Be righteous to Live and to Enter the Kingdom of Heaven

- Ezek 18:22, All his transgressions that he hath committed, they shall not be mentioned unto him: in his righteousness that he hath done he shall live.
- Matt 5:20, For I say unto you, That except your righteousness shall exceed the righteousness of the scribes and Pharisees, ye shall in no case enter into the kingdom of heaven. (cp. with v. 19)

Righteousness or Torah-Obedience Brings Physical and Spiritual Blessings

- Ps 18:20, YHVH rewarded me according to my righteousness; according to the cleanness of my hands hath he recompensed me.
- Ps 18:24, Therefore hath YHVH recompensed me according to my righteousness, according to the cleanness of my hands in his eyesight.
- Ps 106:3, Blessed are they that keep judgment, and he that doeth righteousness at all times.
- Ps 112:3, Wealth and riches shall be in his house: and his righteousness endureth for ever.
- Prov 11:18, The wicked worketh a deceitful work: but to him that soweth righteousness shall be a sure reward.
- Prov 11:19, As righteousness tendeth to life: so he that pursueth evil pursueth it to his own death.
- Prov 14:34, Righteousness exalteth a nation: but sin is a reproach to any people.
- Prov 21:21, He that followeth after righteousness and mercy findeth life, righteousness, and honour.
- Matt 5:6, Blessed are they which do hunger and thirst after righteousness: for they shall be filled.
- Matt 5:10, Blessed are they which are persecuted for righteousness' sake: for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.

- Matt 6:33, But seek ye first the kingdom of Elohim, and his righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you.

Those Who Are Righteousness Are Accepted of YHVH

- Acts 10:35, But in every nation he that feareth him, and worketh righteousness, is accepted with him.

Righteousness (the Torah or Word of Elohim) Will Be the Standard by Which YHVH Will Judge the World

- Ps 9:8, And he shall judge the world in righteousness, he shall minister judgment to the people in uprightness.
- Ps 33:5, He loveth righteousness and judgment: the earth is full of the goodness of YHVH.

Righteousness and judgment go hand-in-hand, since the righteous precepts of Torah is/will be the standard by which YHVH will judge all humans.

- Ps 35:24, Judge me, O YHVH my Elohim, according to thy righteousness; and let them not rejoice over me.
- Ps 96:13, Before YHVH: for he cometh, for he cometh to judge the earth: he shall judge the world with righteousness, and the people with his truth.
- Prov 11:6, The righteousness of the upright shall deliver them: but transgressors shall be taken in their own naughtiness.
- Isa 11:4, But with righteousness shall he judge the poor, and reprove with equity for the meek of the earth: and he shall smite the earth with the rod of his mouth, and with the breath of his lips shall he slay the wicked.
- Jer 9:24, But let him that glorieth glory in this, that he understandeth and knoweth me, that I am YHVH which exercise lovingkindness, judgment, and righteousness, in the earth: for in these things I delight, saith YHVH.
- Jer 22:3, Thus saith YHVH; Execute ye judgment and righteousness, and deliver the spoiled out of the hand of the oppressor: and do no wrong, do no violence to the stranger, the fatherless, nor the widow, neither shed innocent blood in this place.
- Jer 33:15, In those days, and at that time, will I cause the Branch of righteousness to grow up unto David; and he shall execute judgment and righteousness in the land.
- Amos 5:24, But let judgment run down as waters, and righteousness as a mighty stream.
- John 16:8, And when he is come, he will reprove the world of sin, and of righteousness, and of judgment...
- John 16:10, Of righteousness, because I go to my Father, and ye see me no more.
- Acts 17:31, Because he hath appointed a day, in the which he will judge the world in righteousness by that man whom he hath ordained; whereof he hath given assurance unto all men, in that he hath raised him from the dead.

Righteousness Will Save One in the Day of Judgment

- Prov 11:6, The righteousness of the upright shall deliver them: but transgressors shall be taken in their own naughtiness.

John Preached Righteousness

- Matt 21:32, For John came unto you in the way of righteousness, and ye believed him not: but the publicans and the harlots believed him: and ye, when ye had seen it, repented not afterward, that ye might believe him.

What was John's message? It was: "Repent for the kingdom of heaven is at hand." Repent of what? Sin, which the Bible defines as the violation of the Torah or the teachings, instructions, precepts or laws of Elohim as found in the first five books (or the Torah) of Scripture (1John 3:4). Again, Torah defines what righteousness is.

Righteousness and Holiness Go Hand-in-Hand

- Luke 1:74-75, That he would grant unto us, that we being delivered out of the hand of our enemies might

serve him without fear, in holiness and righteousness before him, all the days of our life.

The biblical definition of holiness is “to be set apart or separated from that which is profane, polluted, defiled or secular, or is contrary to a holy or set-apart Elohim. It is that which is separated from the world, the flesh and the devil.” What determines what is set-apart? The Torah does, which is YHVH’s instructions in righteousness. What tells us how to live a set-apart life? The Torah does, which is YHVH’s standard for and definition of righteousness (Ps 119:172).

Righteousness Is an Action — i.e., Torah Obedience

- Ps 52:3, Thou lovest evil more than good; and lying rather than to speak righteousness.
- Ps 58:1, Do ye indeed speak righteousness, O congregation? Do ye judge uprightly, O ye sons of men?
- Prov 12:17, He that speaketh truth sheweth forth righteousness: but a false witness deceit.

Righteousness Involves Works — i.e., Torah-Obedience

- Ps 15:2, He that walketh uprightly, and worketh righteousness, and speaketh the truth in his heart.
- Ps 112:9, He hath dispersed, he hath given to the poor; his righteousness endureth for ever; his horn shall be exalted with honour.
- Acts 10:35, But in every nation he that feareth him, and worketh righteousness, is accepted with him.
- Rev 19:8, And to her was granted that she should be arrayed in fine linen, clean and white: for the fine linen is the righteousness [or “righteous deeds” — NIV, NAS] of the saints.

Righteousness Comes From YHVH Elohim

- Ps 24:5, He shall receive the blessing from YHVH, and righteousness from the Elohim of his salvation.

To Be Righteous Is to Become Like Elohim

- Ps, 17:15 As for me, I will behold thy face in righteousness: I shall be satisfied, when I awake, with thy likeness [Heb. form, image, likeness, representation, semblance].

YHVH’s Servants Are to Preach Righteousness — the Righteous Standards of the Torah

- Ps 40:9, I have preached righteousness in the great congregation: lo, I have not refrained my lips, O YHVH, thou knowest.

Righteousness and the Salvation of YHVH Go Hand-in-Hand

- Ps 98:2, YHVH hath made known his salvation [or Yeshua, in Hebrew]: his righteousness hath he openly shewed in the sight of the heathen.

YHVH makes known his salvation [or Yeshua] to the heathen by revealing to them his Word or the righteous standards of the Written Torah (the first five books of the Bible) along with the a knowledge of Yeshua, the Living Torah, or the Word of Elohim that was became flesh (John 1:1,14), which is the means to become righteous before Elohim and be blessed of him and avoid falling under his judgments or curses for disobedience to the Torah.

- Prov 11:6, The righteousness of the upright shall deliver them: but transgressors shall be taken in their own naughtiness.
- Isa 46:13, I bring near my righteousness; it shall not be far off, and my salvation shall not tarry: and I will place salvation in Zion for Israel my glory.
- Isa 51:5, My righteousness is near; my salvation is gone forth, and mine arms shall judge the people; the isles shall wait upon me, and on mine arm shall they trust.
- Isa 51:6, Lift up your eyes to the heavens, and look upon the earth beneath: for the heavens shall vanish away like smoke, and the earth shall wax old like a garment, and they that dwell therein shall die in like manner: but my salvation shall be for ever, and my righteousness shall not be abolished.
- Isa 56:1, Thus saith YHVH, Keep ye judgment, and do justice: for my salvation is near to come, and my righteousness to be revealed.

We Must Grow in Righteousness

- Ps 119:40, Behold, I have longed after thy precepts; quicken me in thy righteousness.

The Salvation Model of Abraham and Imputed Righteousness

Abraham was the precursor example of an individual placing their faith in the Word of Elohim (i.e., the Messiah, or the Word of Elohim before he was incarnated into Yeshua) and having that faith attributed or imputed to him as righteousness or right-standing before YHVH — something that occurs at the beginning of one's spiritual walk or relationship with YHVH. After one has been granted the spiritual status of being in right-standing (or made righteous) — which involves one's sins (i.e., the violation of YHVH's Torah-laws) being forgiven — before YHVH, then one has now to walk in obedience to the Torah (i.e., stop sinning).

- Jas 2:23, And the scripture was fulfilled which saith, "Abraham believed Elohim, and it was imputed unto him for righteousness: and he was called the Friend of Elohim."
- Rom 3:21–22, But now the righteousness of Elohim without the law is manifested, being witnessed by the law and the prophets; even the righteousness of Elohim which is by faith of [or in, through] Yeshua the Messiah unto all and upon all them that believe...

Verse 22 says "by faith of Jesus" (KJV) and is alternately translated as "through faith in Jesus" (NIV, NKJV, NAS) and "through faith in Yeshua" (Gabriel Bible). Even as Abraham — who was a new believer in Elohim at the time — had faith in the Word of Elohim (who later became Yeshua the Messiah, see John 1:1,14), so the faith of a new believer must still be in the Word of Elohim; that is, it must be in Yeshua, the Living Torah Word of Elohim. In Romans 10:5–10, Paul equate the Written Torah with Yeshua, the Living Torah. For him they are synonymous concepts; they are indivisible and two sides of the same coin.

- Rom 3:26, To declare, I say, at this time his righteousness: that he might be just, and the justifier of him which believeth in Yeshua.
- Rom 4:3, For what saith the scripture? Abraham believed Elohim, and it was counted unto him for righteousness.
- Rom 4:5–6, But to him that worketh not, but believeth on him that justifieth the ungodly, his faith is counted for righteousness. Even as David also describeth the blessedness of the man, unto whom Elohim imputeth righteousness without works.

In Romans 4:7, Paul quotes Psalm 32:1–2 where David speaks of Elohim forgiving and covering sin and no longer imputing sin to an individual. Paul shows that when one places faith in Yeshua, the Word of Elohim (Rom 3:26; 10:5–10), even as Abraham placed faith in the Word of Elohim, the forgiveness or grace of Elohim is poured out and covers one's *past* sins (Rom 3:25). Only past sins are forgiven; never future sins! When one comes to faith in Yeshua, repents of his sins, the grace of YHVH is then poured out, and all his past sins are covered (by the blood of Yeshua) and are forgiven. The death penalty for sin (for violating YHVH's Torah-laws, Ezek 18:4) is no longer over that person (Rom 6:23). At this point, an individual is granted the legal status of being made *righteousness* before Elohim. From this point on, however, one must continue to walk in righteousness, which is to love Yeshua by obeying his Word (the Torah, John 14:15) and to walk in his Spirit (i.e., to be led, motivated, empowered, submitted to, and directed by the Spirit of Elohim into all the good works of the Torah, which is summed up by the famous *shema* passage in the Torah (Deut 6:5 and Lev 19:18), which is "to love YHVH with all of our heart, soul, mind and strength, and our neighbor as ourselves.")

- Rom 4:9, Cometh this blessedness then upon the circumcision only, or upon the uncircumcision also? For we say that faith was reckoned to Abraham for righteousness.
- Rom 4:11, And he received the sign of circumcision, a seal of the righteousness of the faith which he had yet being uncircumcised: that he might be the father of all them that believe, though they be not circumcised; that righteousness might be imputed unto them also...
- Rom 4:22, And therefore it was imputed to him for righteousness.
- Heb 11:7, By faith Noah, being warned of Elohim of things not seen as yet, moved with fear, prepared an ark to the saving of his house; by the which he condemned the world, and became heir of the righteousness which is by faith.

Noah is another example from the Tanakh (OT) of one who had faith in the Word of Elohim (and he was also a Torah-keeper, for he knew about clean and unclean meats, the Shabbat, and he was a preacher of [Torah] righteousness, 2 Pet 2:5), and this resulted in his salvation from the righteous judgment of Elohim against wickedness. (See 2 Pet 2:5, "... and [Elohim] spared not the old world, but saved Noah the eighth person, a preacher of righteousness, bringing in the flood upon the world of the ungodly.")

- Heb 11:33, Who through faith subdued kingdoms, wrought righteousness, obtained promises, stopped the mouths of lions...

There are more examples of OT personages who had faith in the Word of Elohim (the pre-incarnate Yeshua) and walked in Torah.

Imputed Righteousness Is a Result of the Grace of Elohim

Imputed righteousness is a result of the mercy or grace of Elohim through the merits of the sin-cleansing or redemptive power of the blood of Yeshua resulting in the good works of Torah.

- Tit 3:5–8, Not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to his mercy he saved us, by the washing of regeneration, and renewing of the Set-Apart Spirit; which he shed on us abundantly through Yeshua the Messiah, our Saviour; that being justified by his grace, we should be made heirs according to the hope of eternal life. This is a faithful saying, and these things I will that thou affirm constantly, that they which have believed in Elohim might **be careful to maintain good works**. These things are good and profitable unto men. (emphasis added)

Here Paul shows how the grace and mercy of Elohim through Yeshua should lead us to "maintain the good works" (of the Torah). Men are not able to earn their salvation by their own works of righteousness or Torah-obedience. Salvation is a free gift of Elohim based on his mercy by Yeshua and through the Spirit.

Imputed Righteousness Comes by Faith in Yeshua who is the Word of Elohim

- Rom 3:21–22, But now the righteousness of Elohim without the law is manifested, being witnessed by the law and the prophets; even the righteousness of Elohim which is by faith of/in/through Yeshua the Messiah unto all and upon all them that believe: for there is no difference.
- Rom 4:13, For the promise, that he should be the heir of the world, was not to Abraham, or to his seed, through the law, but through the righteousness of faith.
- Rom 9:30, What shall we say then? That the Gentiles, which followed not after righteousness, have attained to righteousness, even the righteousness which is of faith.
- Gal 3:6, Even as Abraham believed Elohim, and it was accounted to him for righteousness.

Imputed Righteousness Is Predicated on the Merits of Yeshua's Righteousness and Is a Free Gift

- Rom 5:17–18, 21 For if by one man's offence death reigned by one; much more they which receive abundance of grace and of the gift of righteousness shall reign in life by one, Yeshua the Messiah.) Therefore as by the offence of one judgment came upon all men to condemnation; even so by the righteousness of one the free gift came upon all men unto justification of life. ... That as sin hath reigned unto death, even so might grace reign through righteousness unto eternal life by Yeshua our Messiah.
- 1 Pet 2:24, Who his own self bare our sins in his own body on the tree, that we, being dead to sins, should live unto righteousness: by whose stripes ye were healed.

Paul Juxtaposes Sin (Torahlessness) and Righteousness (Torah-Obedience)

- Rom 6:13, Neither yield ye your members as instruments of unrighteousness unto sin: but yield yourselves unto Elohim, as those that are alive from the dead, and your members as instruments of righteousness unto Elohim.
- Rom 6:16, 17, 18–20, Know ye not, that to whom ye yield yourselves servants to obey, his servants ye are to whom ye obey; whether of sin unto death, or of obedience unto righteousness? ... Being then made free from sin, ye became the servants of righteousness. I speak after the manner of men because of the infirmity of your flesh: for as ye have yielded your members servants to uncleanness and to iniquity unto

iniquity; even so now yield your members servants to righteousness unto holiness. For when ye were the servants of sin, ye were free from righteousness.

- 1 Cor 15:34, Awake to righteousness, and sin not; for some have not the knowledge of Elohim: I speak this to your shame.
- 2 Cor 6:14, Be ye not unequally yoked together with unbelievers: for what fellowship hath righteousness with unrighteousness? and what communion hath light with darkness?

Yeshua Living in Us by the Spirit Helps Us to Fulfill the Righteous Requirement of the Torah

- Rom 8:1 and 4, There is therefore now no condemnation to them which are in Messiah Yeshua, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit. ... That the righteousness of the law might be fulfilled in us, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit.
- Rom 8:10, And if Messiah be in you, the body is dead because of sin; but the Spirit is life because of righteousness.

YHWH Will Quickly Regather Scattered Israel, Then Bring Righteousness Judgment Upon the Earth

- Rom 9:28–29, For he will finish the work, and cut it short in righteousness: because a short work will the Messiah make upon the earth. And as Isaiah said before, “Except the Messiah of Sabaoth/Armies/Hosts had left us a seed, we had been as Sodom, and been made like unto Gomorrah.”

There Is a “Righteousness” That Comes from Legalistically Keeping the Torah

- Rom 2:26, Therefore if the uncircumcision keep the righteousness of the law, shall not his uncircumcision be counted for circumcision?

The Bible describes a “righteousness” that is a result of keeping the Torah in a mechanistic, letter-of-the-law or legalistic manner devoid of love and faith. This is an incomplete or pseudo-righteousness and is something that both Yeshua and Paul vociferously attacked as we shall discuss later. In Romans 2:26, Paul refers to this legalistic righteousness as “the righteousness of the law.” This is man’s righteousness — or better yet, self righteousness!

Imputed Righteousness/Faith in Yeshua Combined with Torah-Obedience Equals True Righteousness

- Rom 9:31–33, But Israel, which followed after the law of righteousness, hath not attained to the law of righteousness. Wherefore? Because they sought it not by faith, but as it were by the works of the law. For they stumbled at that stumblingstone; as it is written, “Behold, I lay in Zion a stumblingstone and rock of offence: and whosoever believeth on him shall not be ashamed.”

There is a pseudo-righteousness that comes from a perfect and legalistic obedience to the Torah. Theoretically, one could keep all the regulations of Torah, but without a circumcised heart characterized by love and faith, and still miss true righteousness. A letter-of-the-law, works-based or legalistic adherence is the pseudo-righteousness that Yeshua was attacking in the hypocritical religionists of his day. They were self-righteously proud of their works, yet they had missed the heart and the spirit of the Torah. Yeshua called these things — judgment, mercy and faith (i.e., the heart and the spirit of the Torah) — the weightier matters of the Torah (Matt 23:23).

Next we see that true righteousness combines faith in Yeshua the Living Torah with obedience to the Written Torah.

- Rom 10:4–6, For Messiah is the aim [or end result, goal] of the law for righteousness to every one that believeth. For Moses describeth the righteousness which is of the law, That the man which doeth those things shall live by them. But the righteousness which is of faith speaketh on this wise, Say not in thine heart, Who shall ascend into heaven? (that is, to bring Messiah down from above).

Through faith in Messiah, one can attain to the true righteousness of the Torah. Through the example of his physical life, Yeshua showed us how to have love and faith while obeying the Torah. Through his Spirit abiding in us, the spiritual realities of his death, burial and resurrection being lived out in us, we are now empowered to walk in true righteousness and follow the letter *and* the spirit of the Torah by faith in and love for him, and not legalistically and self-righteously in our own pride-engendering power.

- Rom 10:10, For with the heart man believeth unto righteousness; and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation.

- Eph 4:24, And that ye put on the new man, which after Elohim is created in righteousness and true holiness. (See the context of the surrounding verses 11–32.)

True Righteousness Doesn't Come Through Torah-Obedience Alone

- Gal 2:21, I do not frustrate the grace of Elohim: for if righteousness come by the Torah, then Messiah is dead in vain.
- Gal 3:21, Is the Torah then against the promises of Elohim? Elohim forbid: for if there had been a Torah given which could have given life, verily righteousness should have been by the Torah.

Torah Righteousness (Without Yeshua) is Pseudo-Righteousness or Self-Righteousness

- Rom 10:3, For they being ignorant of Elohim's righteousness, and going about to establish their own righteousness [self-righteousness], have not submitted themselves unto the righteousness of Elohim.

Men's own righteousness devoid of mercy and faith is the pseudo-righteousness (or self-righteousness), which is based on a legalistic obedience to the Torah, that both Yeshua and Paul were so much against.

- Phil 3:6–9, Concerning zeal, persecuting the church; touching the righteousness which is in the law, blameless. But what things were gain to me, those I counted loss for Messiah. Yea doubtless, and I count all things but loss for the excellency of the knowledge of Yeshua my Messiah: for whom I have suffered the loss of all things, and do count them but dung, that I may win Messiah, and be found in him, not having mine own righteousness, which is of the law, but that which is through the faith of Messiah, the righteousness which is of Elohim by faith.

Torah-righteousness alone without faith in Yeshua, who is the Word of Elohim, is based on the works of men and as such is an incomplete or pseudo-righteousness or is self-righteousness. The reason I say "faith in Yeshua/the Word of Elohim" is because Abraham had faith in the Word of Elohim, and he even had — in some way — an understanding of the gospel message (Gal 3:8, 16; Heb 11:10, 17, 19) with Yeshua the Redeemer at its center. In Romans 4 (and Rom 10:6) Paul equates Abraham's faith in the Word of Elohim with faith in Yeshua, so in YHVH's eyes, these are one and the same.

Paul Compares Pseudo-Righteousness With True Righteousness

- Rom 10:5–6, For Moses describeth the righteousness which is of the Torah, That the man which doeth those things shall live by them. But the righteousness which is of faith speaketh on this wise, Say not in thine heart, Who shall ascend into heaven? (that is, to bring Messiah down from above:)

In the Torah, YHVH inspired Moses to describe a righteousness that many Jews of Yeshua's and Paul's day construed to be based on simply a legalistic, letter-of-the-law or virtually robotic obedience to the Torah. Did Moses really teach that righteousness was based on a mechanistic approach to Torah-obedience? Absolutely not.

In numerous places in the Torah, YHVH speaking through Moses describes a Torah-obedience that is coupled with a heart-obedience.

- Leviticus 26:17–18 speaks of heart issues when it comes to one's relations with one's neighbor.
- In Deuteronomy 4:1–2, 9, 29, 39, Moses urges the younger generation of Israelites to obey Torah from their hearts.
- The plea of Moses in Deuteronomy 5:29 is this:

O that there were such an heart in them, that they would fear me, and keep all my commandments always, that it might be well with them, and with their children for ever!
- In the *shema* passage of Deuteronomy 6:5–6, YHVH declares,

And thou shalt love YHVH thy Elohim with all thine heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy might. And these words, which I command thee this day, shall be in thine heart.
- Deuteronomy 8:2 shows us that throughout Israel's wanderings in the wilderness, YHVH was proving the Israelites to ascertain what the condition of their heart was with respect to Torah-obedience.
- In Deuteronomy 9:4–5 we see that Israel's heart was not right before YHVH. He warned them against

having a pseudo-righteous or self-righteous attitude whereby they thought that he was giving them the Promised Land because of their “righteousness.” This pseudo-righteousness was a result of man’s unrealistic assessment of his own “good works,” but that missed the mark of true righteousness (as defined by Elohim and not man) that involved not merely good works, but a right heart as well. Both Yeshua and Paul were dealing with these same misconceptions held by the religious leaders of their days concerning the definition of righteousness. The “righteousness of man” or as Paul calls it “the righteousness of the law” — is a “righteousness” of the invention of man’s mind and which is based on legalism and tends to excuse man’s sins of the heart. Again, this pseudo-righteousness misses the mark of true righteousness as defined by Elohim.

- True righteousness involves walking in all the ways of the Torah-obedience and loving Elohim with all one’s heart.

And now, Israel, what doth YHVH thy Elohim require of thee, but to fear YHVH thy Elohim, to walk in all his ways, and to love him, and to serve YHVH thy Elohim with all thy heart and with all thy soul. (Deut 10:12; see also 11:13; 13:13; 26:16)

- True righteousness involves having a circumcised heart.

Circumcise therefore the foreskin of your heart, and be no more stiffnecked. (Deut 10:16)

- Other Torah passages that deal with obeying Torah out of a right heart include Deuteronomy 15:7, 9, 10; 17:17, 20.
- YHVH promises to punish his people for not serving him (i.e., obeying Torah) with joyfulness and gladness of heart (Deut 28:47–48).
- YHVH prophesies of a time in the last days when lost and scattered Israelites will repent of their sinful ways and return to the Torah and serve and obey him with all their heart and soul (Deut 30:2). At that time, YHVH will circumcise the hearts of his people so that they will love him (vv. 6–20). This is true righteousness.

It is interesting to note in the context of our discussion on pseudo-righteousness (or legalistic, self-righteousness) versus true righteous with respect to the children of Israel that although the older generation that died off in the wilderness did receive the same gospel message as we have been taught (Heb 4:2), they (except for several notable exceptions) didn’t attain to true righteousness. The older generation miserably failed to keep the Torah. They missed both the letter and the spirit of it, because their hearts weren’t circumcised. They did not love YHVH and his Word with all their hearts, and they lacked faith in him and his Word (Rom 9:30–32; Heb 4:2) The carnal nature or “flesh man” prevented them from attaining to the high standards of godly righteousness.

By contrast, the younger generation that was about to enter into the Promised Land, was given explicit instructions on the subject of true righteousness in Deuteronomy. YHVH encouraged them to learn from the lessons of the past and not to repeat the sins of their fathers who died in the wilderness as they prepared to enter the Promised Land under Joshua (Yehoshua or Yeshua for short). We read in the in the Book of Judges that the younger generation remained faithful to the Torah all the days of Joshua’s life, but as soon as he died, the Israelites fell away spiritually, and every man did that which was right in his own eyes (Judg 2:7, 10–11).

Joshua leading the new generation of Israelites into the Promised Land is a prophetic picture of Yeshua leading the “new spiritual man” of the redeemed Israelite believers into the Promised Land of YHVH’s kingdom. Each redeemed believer has to leave the old man of the flesh nature to die in the wilderness of his past life, and when he comes to faith in Yeshua, he becomes a new man or a new creation through the Spirit of Elohim (see Gal 2:20; 2 Cor 5:17). Our hearts become circumcised and we are empowered to be able to keep the Torah (both the letter and the spirit of it) through his grace (the divine enabling of his Spirit living in us). As long as we follow Yeshua, all will go well and we will attain to the true righteousness of YHVH and find an everlasting reward and habitation in his spiritual kingdom.

Through Yeshua Is True Righteousness

Righteousness through Yeshua is like a spiritual vehicle to bring us into a complete Torah-obedience righteousness that is *not* based on the works of men. Since godly righteousness is not based on works but on faith in Yeshua and on the merits of his righteousness and the empowerment of YHVH’s Spirit, man cannot glory in his own abilities, but must give the praise to Elohim.

- 1 Cor 1:30–31, But of him are ye in Messiah Yeshua, who of Elohim is made unto us wisdom, and righteousness, and sanctification, and redemption; that, according as it is written, “He that glorieth, let him glory in the Messiah.”

Only through Yeshua are we able to attain to the true righteousness, in which we are to glory.

- 2 Cor 5:21, For he hath made him to be sin for us, who knew no sin; that we might be made the righteousness of Elohim in him.
- Eph 4:24, And that ye put on the new man, which after Elohim is created in righteousness and true holiness. [See the context of the surrounding verses 11–32.]
- Phil 1:11, Being filled with the fruits of righteousness, which are by Yeshua the Messiah, unto the glory and praise of Elohim.
- 2 Pet 1:1, Simon Peter, a servant and an apostle of Yeshua the Messiah, to them that have obtained like precious faith with us through the righteousness of Elohim and our Saviour Yeshua the Messiah.

The Righteousness of Yeshua Will Keep Us Righteous Before YHVH

As we learned above, at the time of one’s conversion from the kingdom of darkness to that of light when one initially places their faith in Yeshua/the Word of Elohim, one’s past sins are forgiven and the righteousness (i.e., the sinlessness) of Yeshua is attributed to the newly redeemed believer. At this time, through the merits of Yeshua’s perfect life, Elohim grants one the spiritual legal status of being righteous, or being deemed morally right or just before Elohim. This is called *justification*. To justify means “to make something even, just, right or righteous.”

However, at this place in our discussion, another point needs to be made. Even with the help of YHVH’s Spirit living in us, the redeemed believer in Yeshua is still not able to live up perfectly to the high standards of YHVH’s Torah. Due to the powerful influences of man’s rebellious and flesh nature, he is prone to sin. Paul describes the struggle within himself between the flesh and Spirit in the most candid terms. (Please read Romans 7.) Because of this struggle, Paul at times wonders if he will be able to live a sufficiently righteous enough life to be able to attain even to the resurrection of the dead (Phil 3:9 and 11).

Certainly, when a person sins, John instructs us to “confess our sins, [and Elohim] is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness” (1 John 1:9). What, however, if we fail to confess all of our sins all the time? (David speaks of “secret faults” or hidden sins of which we may not even be aware, Pss 90:8; 129:12.) What if we happen to sin just before we tragically and unexpectedly meet our death? Will we be spiritually lost forever? What if, despite our best efforts out of a heart of love, faith and devotion to Elohim due to human weakness or a lack of a complete understanding of YHVH’s righteous standards, we simply fail to live up to all the righteous requirements of the Torah? What happens to us then?

Paul has an answer to this dilemma. Paul confesses that he tried zealously to keep the Torah-law on his own human effort for many years (Phil 3:4–6), but failed to hit the mark of true righteousness, and even counted his efforts as dung (vv. 7–8). Isaiah adds that all the righteousness of man is as filthy [lit. menstrual] rags” (Isa 64:6). Man, even through his best efforts *and* with help of the Spirit of Elohim, still falls short of measuring up to the true standards of godly righteousness and perfection. How then can he be accounted righteous before Elohim?

The righteousness of Yeshua is the answer! We read,

And be found in [Messiah], not having mine own righteousness, which is of the Torah, but that **which is through the faith of Messiah, the righteousness which is of Elohim by faith.** (Phil 3:9)

That no flesh should glory in his presence. But of him are ye in Messiah Yeshua, who of Elohim is **made unto us** wisdom, and **righteousness**, and sanctification, and redemption: that, according as it is written, “He that glorieth, let him glory in YHVH.” (1 Cor 1:29–31; see also Rom 3:27)

For they being ignorant of **Elohim’s righteousness**, and going about to establish their own righteousness, have not submitted themselves unto the righteousness of Elohim. (Rom 10:3)

But now **the righteousness of Elohim** without the Torah is manifested, being witnessed by the law and the prophets; even the righteousness of Elohim **which is by faith of Yeshua** the Messiah unto all and upon all them that believe, for there is no difference, for all have sinned, and come short of the glory of Elohim; being justified freely by his grace through the redemption that is in Messiah Yeshua: whom Elohim hath set forth to be a propitiation through faith in his blood, **to declare his righteous-**

ness for the remission of sins [i.e., Torahlessness] that are past, through the forbearance of Elohim. (Rom 3:21–25, emphasis added on all)

This message of Messiah’s righteousness being credited to our spiritual account is a very foundation stone of the gospel message! Paul writes,

For I am not ashamed of the gospel of the Messiah, for it is the power of Elohim unto salvation to every one that believeth; to the Jew first, and also to the Greek. For therein is the righteousness of Elohim revealed from faith to faith: as it is written, “The just shall live by faith.” (Rom 1:16–17)

This righteousness is called a free gift in Romans 5:17. This wonderful gift of heavenly righteousness being attributed or credited to man was prophesied in the Tanakh (OT).

I will greatly rejoice in YHVH, my soul shall be joyful in my Elohim; for he hath clothed me with the garments of salvation, **he hath covered me with the robe of righteousness**, as a bridegroom decketh himself with ornaments, and as a bride adorneth herself with her jewels. (Isa 61:10, emphasis added)

When we fail to measure up to YHVH’s righteous standards, Paul is saying that Elohim applies the righteousness of Yeshua to us because of our faith in Yeshua. No wonder Paul could proclaim in exultation, “Nay, in all things, we are more than conquerors through him that loves us,” (Rom 7:37), “If Elohim be for us, who can be against us” (Rom 8:31), and “I can do all things through Messiah who strengthens me” (Phil 4:13). In this way, Elohim receives all the glory, and not man as Paul declares (1 Cor 1:29–31).

The Renewed Covenant Reveals True Righteousness Thus Exceeding in Glory the Former Covenant

- Isa 42:21, YHVH is well pleased for his righteousness’ sake; he will magnify the Torah, and make it honourable [Heb. great, majestic, wide, noble].

This is likely a prophecy about the coming of the Renewed Covenant, the Messiah and the outpouring of the Set-Apart Spirit of YHVH upon men, which would enable men to keep the letter and the spirit of the Torah from a circumcised heart in the power of the resurrected Yeshua by his Spirit. All of this was necessary because of men’s disobedience to the Torah and inability to keep Torah (Isa 42:24).

- 2 Cor 3:9, For if the ministration of condemnation be glory, much more doth the ministration of righteousness exceed in glory.
- 2 Cor 9:9, (As it is written, He hath dispersed abroad; he hath given to the poor: his righteousness remaineth for ever.

Loving One’s Neighbor Is Righteousness

- 2 Cor 9:10, Now he that ministereth seed to the sower both minister bread for your food, and multiply your seed sown, and increase the fruits of your righteousness)...

To Be Righteous Is to Be Like Elohim — to Be Part of His Family

- 1 John 2:29, If ye know that he is righteous, ye know that every one that doeth righteousness is born of him.
- 1 John 3:7, Little children, let no man deceive you: he that doeth righteousness is righteous, even as he is righteous.
- 1 John 3:10, In this the children of Elohim are manifest, and the children of the devil: whosoever doeth not righteousness is not of Elohim, neither he that loveth not his brother.

The Bride of Yeshua Will Be a Righteous Bride

- Rev 19:8, And to her was granted that she should be arrayed in fine linen, clean and white: for the fine linen is the righteousness of saints.

The white wedding garments are the righteous deeds of Torah (see the NKJV, NIV and NAS translations of this verse). This is why the bride of Yeshua has such a high reward because she’s walking in a complete, full or true righteousness that involves faith in Yeshua and loving him by keeping his Torah-commands (John 14:15; Rev 12:17; 14:12). These are the attributes of saints who are the bride of Yeshua. These are those “which were not defiled with women; for they are virgins. These are they which follow the Lamb whithersoever he goeth. These were redeemed

from among men, being the firstfruits unto Elohim and to the Lamb” (Rev 14:4).

Righteousness and Praise Will Go Forth from Jerusalem to All Nations (During the Millennium)

- Isa 61:11, For as the earth bringeth forth her bud, and as the garden causeth the things that are sown in it to spring forth; so the Messiah YHVH will cause righteousness and praise to spring forth before all the nations.
- Isa 62:1–3, For Zion’s sake will I not hold my peace, and for Jerusalem’s sake I will not rest, until the righteousness thereof go forth as brightness, and the salvation thereof as a lamp that burneth. And the Gentiles shall see thy righteousness, and all kings thy glory: and thou shalt be called by a new name, which the mouth of YHVH shall name.

There Is Future Righteousness by Faith

There is a past righteousness (imputed to us by faith at the time of our salvation and which involves forgiveness of our *past* sins, Rom 3:25 cp. vv. 21–24), a present righteousness to be attained by Torah-obedience through Yeshua’s Spirit living in us and his righteousness continually being imputed to us as we walk in his ways, but fall short, and a future righteousness to come (that will probably come when the resurrected saints receive their glorified bodies and “will be like him, for we shall see him as he is,” 1John 3:2).

- Gal 5:5, For we through the Spirit wait for the hope of righteousness by faith.
- 2 Tim 4:8, Henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, which the Messiah, the righteous judge, shall give me at that day: and not to me only, but unto all them also that love his appearing.
- 2 Pet 3:13, Nevertheless we, according to his promise, look for new heavens and a new earth, wherein dwelleth righteousness.

Pseudo-Righteousness: a Final Thought

There is another form of pseudo-righteousness that needs to be addressed. In Christian circles, many believe that Yeshua lived a righteous life by fulfilling the law so that the saints are no longer “under the law” and therefore have been freed from having to adhere to the tenets of the law. Certain biblical passages are often cited in an effort to substantiate this philosophical doctrine of men.

Think not that I am come to destroy the law, or the prophets: I am not come to destroy, but to fulfil.
(Matt 5:17)

For Christ is the end of the law for righteousness to every one that believeth. (Rom 10:4)

Blotting out the handwriting of ordinances that was against us, which was contrary to us, and took it out of the way, nailing it to his cross. (Col 2:14)

More scriptures could be quoted. This is just a sampling. It is outside the scope of this study to prove how Bible teachers have misunderstood these scriptures, have misquoted them, mistranslated them from the Greek, have taken out of context, or misunderstood them in light of whole counsel of YHVH’s Word to make them say something they don’t. However, one scripture stands out above the others as seeming to say that Yeshua did it all for us — that we don’t have to do anything at all including adhering to the Torah. It is Colossians 2:10–11.

And ye are complete in him, which is the head of all principality and power: in whom also ye are circumcised with the circumcision made without hands, in putting off the body of the sins of the flesh by the circumcision of Christ: buried with him in baptism, wherein also ye are risen with him through the faith of the operation of God, who hath raised him from the dead. (KJV)

Some Bible teachers will take this scripture to mean that through the spiritual concept of substitution or identification Yeshua did everything for us; he fulfilled the righteous requirements of the Torah so that we don’t have to. After all, if we are *in him* spiritually, then this means he did it for us — in our place, and that we are spiritually complete in him (v. 10), and are seated with him in heavenly places (Eph 2:6). After all, doesn’t scripture plainly tell us that he died for our sins so that we wouldn’t have to die for our own sins, and that we share in his resurrection victory (Col 2:12)? The rite of baptism, for example, is a prime examples of the concepts of substitution and identification (Rom 6:3–6). Furthermore, he was circumcised so that we would not have to be (Col 2:11). This being so,

some folks reason that since he was circumcised, died, was buried and was resurrected in our place, he must have kept the Torah-law *in our place* as well, *so that we don't have to*.

Despite its great number of adherents, this argument has a number of fatal flaws. The Word of Elohim warns us to “not follow a multitude to do evil” (Exod 23:2). The carnal mind of man has no problem contriving spiritual loopholes that will excuse its rebelliousness against YHVH's Torah — his instructions in righteousness! Wasn't it Paul, the one who is alleged to have freed Christians from having to keep the law also the one who said that “the carnal mind is enmity against Elohim, for it is not subject to the Torah of Elohim, neither indeed can be” (Rom 8:7)?

The Word of Elohim counters this damnable heresy in many ways and in many places. Suffice it to say, if Yeshua's righteousness made it so that we no longer have to keep the law of Elohim, then ...

- It is now permissible to work on the Sabbath, eat whatever we want, have sex with animals, lie, commit adultery, etc.
- Yeshua lied when in the Sermon on the Mount he told us to keep both the letter and spirit of the Torah-law (Matt 5:21-48).
- Yeshua lied when he told us that one's spiritual rewards in the kingdom of Elohim will be based on how obedient to the Torah one was (Matt 5:19).
- Yeshua lied when he commissioned his disciples (and us) to go into the world and to teach men “to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you” (Matt 28:20), which includes adherence to the Torah.
- Paul lied when he told the Corinthians to “be you followers of me, even as I also am of Messiah” (1 Cor 11:1). For had Paul been teaching a message that freed people from the Torah, he would not have been following Messiah!
- The Word of Elohim lies when it says that Elohim does not change (Mal 3:6) and that Yeshua is the same yesterday, today and forever (Heb 13:8).
- The Word of YHVH lies when it tells us that Torah defines what righteousness is (Ps 119:172).
- John the apostle lies when he identifies the end time saints as those who *keep* the commandments of YHVH and holding to the testimony or faith of Yeshua (Rev 12:17; 14:12).
- We could go on!

To say that Yeshua was righteous in our place so that we don't have to *do* righteousness is a clever excuse to justify man's innate rebelliousness against YHVH's standards of righteousness — the Torah.

Paul warned against those who would twist his teachings to say that the righteousness of Elohim being imputed to man on the basis of faith in Yeshua's righteousness (Rom 3:21-22) could somehow be construed to mean that man was now free to ignore Torah-obedience. To counter this argument, Paul declares, “Do we make void the Torah-law through faith [i.e., the imputation of righteousness through faith in Yeshua, see v. 22]? Elohim forbid: yea, we establish the Torah” (Rom 3:31). Jude issues a similar warning when he speaks of men who turn the grace of Elohim in to lasciviousness or licence to do evil (or licentiousness). These ungodly men sneak in to the congregation of the saints falsely teaching that the grace of Elohim now frees men from the righteous standards of the Torah (Jude 4).

What Paul and Jude were warning against is another form of pseudo-righteousness, but this time it is based not on a legalistic obedience to the Torah, but on lawlessness, even as legalism (men thinking that they can become righteous by strictly and legalistically adhering to all the commands of Torah *without* faith in the Word of Elohim — Yeshua the Messiah, who, by his Spirit living in the heart of the redeemed believer, divinely enables one to live up to the righteous standards of the Torah) is a pseudo-righteousness based on men's good works.

Whether it is a righteousness based solely on a man's good works, or based solely on the good works of Yeshua, either way it is a pseudo-righteousness and *not* the true righteousness of the Bible of which David declared concerning the Creator, “he leads me in the paths of righteousness for his name [or reputation's] sake” (Ps 23:3).