

Judaism and Christianity

(2009)

“For I am not ashamed of the Gospel of Christ,
for it is the power of God to salvation for everyone who believes,
for the Jew first and also for the Greek. For in it the righteousness of God is revealed from faith
to faith; as it is written,
“The just shall live by faith,”
Romans 1:16-17

The Gospel is the answer for the sin problem evident in us all. We must be born again!
John 3:3. This is certain should we find it pleasing to escape the eternal torments of hell. The
good news for all men today is that there is forgiveness with God through Calvary if they'll
respond rightly to Christ.

If you consider the cited verse above you'll see that a right belief is crucial for a man to
be incorporated in this Gospel because it is only for those who believe. We also see that this truth
is for absolutely all men everywhere as Paul includes both Jews and Gentiles. He says that God's
righteousness is revealed in the Gospel of Christ and that he is now living it out unashamedly.

It is the “from faith to faith” part of the verse that I most especially wish to draw your
attention to. There are several correct conclusions drawn from this pregnant four word section of
scripture. Some understand that this "from faith to faith" is a way of saying that God's love is
seen from Joseph to Lydia's faith meaning from one Christian's faith to another's and so on.
This is true. Another understands this as a way of saying that salvation is revealed from the start
of any one person's faith to its consummation. This seems to be the most popular gist. The NIV
renders Romans 1:17: “For in the gospel a righteousness from God is revealed, a righteousness
that is by faith from first to last...” I can agree wholeheartedly with both of these blessed
deductions. They're both correct. I believe they have no contradiction either to each other, or to

what I'm going to share here. I want to present another implication alongside them so that we remember that the God of heaven is always just and righteous.

The Bible says that Jesus Christ "...Is the Mediator of the new covenant, by means of death, for the redemption of the transgressions under the first covenant, that those who are called may receive the promise of the eternal inheritance," Hebrews 9:15. When Christ finished His work on earth there was a seamless transition from the Old Testament to the New Testament. God revealed the fullness of the Bible's progressive revelation to the Apostles just after these things took place. The Gospel, which alone is Christ's literal death and Resurrection, shows the Christian his God's immutable holiness and love throughout both the Old and the New Testament. Jesus who is called Christ, the Son of God, came and fulfilled perfectly all the words of both the Law and the prophets. I believe that "From faith to faith" can therefore be read "from Judaism to Christianity." It helped me to see this idea inserted:

For I am not ashamed of the Gospel of Christ,
for it is the power of God to salvation for everyone who believes,
for the Jew first and also for the Greek. For in it the righteousness of God is revealed from
[Judaism to Christianity...]

Please, let me go on and attempt to draw this conclusion more fully for you. It may not be that Paul had this exact intention in mind when he wrote the verse, but I trust he'd say amen. I believe that it's the full counsel that he labored to bring forth. I hear it all throughout his letters. He is not professing a new God, but a new covenant under the same. There are a great many associations by the New Testament writers between the Old and New Covenants. Paul excels in drawing these comparison/contrasts for us.

Let's look at another part of the text to tie this mamma-jamma up. The last part of this New Testament verse says that "The just shall live by faith." I ask you: was this any less proper when Moses wrote it well over millennia before? Here in Romans the Apostle Paul is quoting Moses from Leviticus 18:5. He quotes Moses repeatedly throughout all of his writings. Moses, by God's inspiration, taught that the faithful Hebrew would also "live" by his faith. Under the New Testament Paul unremittingly states that "the just shall live by faith," Galatians 3:5. I want to quickly define what I think Paul has in mind here with the word "*live*." I think it is the same as what Moses meant when he said it though each man's understanding of it was built on very different promises. It's simple. I think that they both mean "*eternal life*." Here again is the section with the words inserted: "...the just shall [live eternally] by faith." See also Romans 10 for this comparison.

Follow me. All men live physically in this life whether they obey God or not, right? So what then makes the just any different? What "life" does a just or rather a justified person possess that an unjustified person doesn't? The answer is that the justified have been given the gift of life eternal; they have been born again into new life. "...The just shall live by faith," and by faith alone! God surely "...Has appointed a day on which He will judge the world in righteousness..." Acts 17:31. Those who reject or play games with Him will never "*live*" spiritually. This is sadly true both here in this life and in the life to come. The justified have always "*lived*" by faith. This was true in Judaism and now in Christianity. There are many Godly Jews and God fearing Gentiles in heaven from under the Old Testament. Moses was not born again, but he was indeed faithful to God. He too, as he said, was justified by faith. Isaac, Abraham's grandson, for example was justified by a faith looking forward to the coming of the Messiah just as every Christian today is saved by faith looking back. It should be no less difficult

for us to see that you can be redeemed in 2009 AD looking back to the cross just like a man could be saved in BC 2009 looking forward to it. All would live by faith. This may help us to see that God alone has always been faithful. It was never by works that men could be saved, Galatians 3:11. God's progressive revelation in the Gospel shows us His faithfulness throughout time.

The Old Testament is like the construction of a light bulb with the New Testament supplying the current to fully illuminate God. God is the Gospel. One testament is really not complete without the other, but one is indeed more glorious. I am not teaching a dual covenant for Jews and Christians. The Bible makes it very clear that Judaism is now finished, and that all men today both Jew and Gentile must repent and trust in Jesus alone for the forgiveness of sin. See Romans 11.

God was faithful throughout the Old Testament to draw men to His Law through faith and repentance, and God is faithful in the New Testament to draw men to Himself as well. He is faithful from faith to faith in Him. Under Moses the world was given the Law and sin was made abundantly manifest among God's people. That Law, most specifically the Ten Commandments, condemn all men from Adam, Exodus 20. That's you and me.

I'm coming to a close now and I'll try to draw this together for you. From the Old Testament, A.K.A. Judaism "...We know that whatever the law says, it says to those who are under the law, that every mouth may be stopped, and all the world may become guilty before God," Romans 3:19. So the whole world is guilty and God is righteous to say so. Then we see that in the New Testament Gospel "God did not send His Son into the world to condemn the world, but that the world through Him might be saved," John 3:17. Paul, when he wrote Romans (as cited at the outset) knew both covenants very well. He said that God is righteous "from faith

to faith.” The other Bible verse that ties these two testaments together in the way I wish you to see them today is that God did it this way to: “...Demonstrate at the present time His righteousness, that He might be just and the justifier of the one who has faith in Jesus,” Romans 3:26.

God revealed His perfect faithfulness in both of His covenants by not just excusing sin but paying for it. Under Judaism he showed the freedom that comes to all those who trust in Him, and under Christianity He now fully gives that freedom in the Gospel to all those who believe. He is both just (Judaism) and the justifier (Christianity) to all those who love Him throughout the histories of both. As I write this letter tonight both Moses and Paul dwell in the eternal glory of their God. God was faithful to them both. In their very separate lives, with steadfast fidelity, they modeled that “from faith to faith...the just shall live by faith.”

Thank you for your attention to this letter.