

Deuteronomy 6:25

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

And it shall be our righteousness, if we observe to do all these commandments before the LORD our God, as he hath commanded us.

Analysis

And it shall be our righteousness, if we observe to do all these commandments before the LORD our God, as he hath commanded us. This crucial verse requires careful theological interpretation, as it addresses the relationship between obedience and righteousness within the old covenant framework.

In the old covenant context, obedience to God's commandments constituted covenant righteousness - maintaining right standing within the theocratic community of Israel. This is not the justifying righteousness that saves, but the covenant faithfulness that demonstrated genuine faith and preserved blessing within the nation.

Paul later argues (Romans 10:5-10) that this law-righteousness pointed forward to the righteousness that comes by faith in Christ. The law revealed God's standard but could not provide the power to fulfill it. Only Christ achieved perfect obedience, and His righteousness is imputed to believers through faith.

Reformed theology maintains the law's threefold use: revealing sin, restraining evil, and guiding believers in sanctification. This verse reflects the third use - for redeemed Israel, obedience demonstrated covenant faithfulness and shaped them into holy people.

Historical Context

This verse concludes Moses' explanation of why Israel must keep God's commandments. The Mosaic covenant operated on the principle of do this and live - obedience brought blessing within the land, while disobedience brought curse and exile.

This covenant structure differs from the Abrahamic covenant of promise and the new covenant of grace. The Mosaic covenant served as tutor (Galatians 3:24) preparing Israel for Christ's coming.

Related Passages

Revelation 20:12 — Judgment according to deeds

Matthew 25:31 — Final judgment

Study Questions

1. How does the righteousness described here differ from the righteousness that justifies us before God?
2. In what sense does obedience remain important for Christians under the new covenant?
3. How did the law's impossible standard drive Israel to trust God's mercy rather than their own works?
4. What does it mean that Christ fulfilled this righteousness requirement on our behalf?
5. How should believers pursue holiness without falling into legalism?

Interlinear Text

וְצִדִּיק ה		תְּהִיָּה	לִּנּו	כִּי	נִשְׁמֹר	וְ	לַעֲשׂוֹת
And it shall be our righteousness		H1961	H0	H3588	if we observe		to do
H6666					H8104		H6213
אֶת	כָּל	הַמִּצְוֹת	הָאֵלֶּה	לִפְנֵי	יְהוָה	אֱלֹהֵינוּ	כְּאֲשֶׁר
H853	H3605	commandments	all these	before	the LORD	our God	H834
		H4687	H2063	H6440	H3068	H430	
צִוָּה:							
as he hath commanded							
H6680							

Additional Cross-References

Deuteronomy 24:13 (Righteousness): In any case thou shalt deliver him the pledge again when the sun goeth down, that he may sleep in his own raiment, and bless thee: and it shall be righteousness unto thee before the LORD thy God.

Romans 10:3 (Righteousness): For they being ignorant of God's righteousness, and going about to establish their own righteousness, have not submitted themselves unto the righteousness of God.