

Romans 3:21

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

But now the righteousness of God without the law is manifested, being witnessed by the law and the prophets;

Analysis

But now the righteousness of God without the law is manifested, being witnessed by the law and the prophets. The great turning point: Nyni de (Νυνὶ δέ, "But now")—the eschatological now of gospel revelation. Dikaiosynē theou (δικαιοσύνη θεοῦ, "righteousness of God") is either God's own righteousness or the righteousness He provides—probably both. Chōris nomou (χωρὶς νόμου, "apart from law")—not through Torah observance.

Pephanerōtai (πεφανερώται, "has been manifested")—perfect tense: revealed and remaining revealed. Though apart from law, it is martyroumenē (μαρτυρουμένη, "witnessed") by the Law and Prophets (the entire OT). Paul will demonstrate this from Abraham (chapter 4) and David (4:6-8). The gospel is not a Plan B but God's eternal purpose, testified to throughout Scripture. This righteousness is sola gratia, sola fide, solus Christus—by grace alone through faith alone in Christ alone.

Historical Context

Paul's "but now" marks the Christ-event as the turning point of history. The messianic age has dawned, bringing the righteousness of God apart from human merit. Paul will spend Romans 4 proving this was God's plan all along, seen in Abraham's justification by faith (Genesis 15:6) centuries before Moses received the law.

Related Passages

Ephesians 2:8 — Salvation by grace through faith

Romans 10:9 — Confession and belief for salvation

John 15:13 — Greatest form of love

1 Corinthians 13:4 — Characteristics of love

Study Questions

1. How does "but now" change everything about your relationship with God—past condemnation yielding to present justification?
2. What does it mean that this righteousness is "apart from law" yet "witnessed by" Scripture?
3. How should the revelation of God's righteousness transform your entire approach to spirituality and assurance?

Interlinear Text

Νυνὶ	δὲ	χωρὶς	νόμου	δικαιοσύνη	θεοῦ	πεφανέρωται
G3570	But	without	the law	the righteousness	of God	is manifested
	G1161	G5565	G3551	G1343	G2316	G5319
μαρτυρουμένη	ὑπὸ	τοῦ	νόμου	καὶ	τῶν	προφητῶν
being witnessed	by	G3588	the law	and	G3588	the prophets
G3140	G5259		G3551	G2532		G4396

Additional Cross-References

Acts 10:43 (Prophecy): To him give all the prophets witness, that through his name whosoever believeth in him shall receive remission of sins.

Jeremiah 33:16 (Righteousness): In those days shall Judah be saved, and Jerusalem shall dwell safely: and this is the name wherewith she shall be called, The LORD our righteousness.

Isaiah 61:10 (Righteousness): I will greatly rejoice in the LORD, my soul shall be joyful in my God; 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.

Isaiah 51:8 (Righteousness): For the moth shall eat them up like a garment, and the worm shall eat them like wool: but my righteousness shall be for ever, and my salvation from generation to generation.

Philippians 3:9 (Righteousness): And be found in him, not having mine own righteousness, which is of the law, but that which is through the faith of Christ, the righteousness which is of God by faith:

Isaiah 46:13 (Righteousness): 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.

Acts 15:11 (Parallel theme): But we believe that through the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ we shall be saved, even as they.

Romans 1:2 (Word): (Which he had promised afore by his prophets in the holy scriptures,)

Romans 5:19 (Righteousness): For as by one man's disobedience many were made sinners, so by the obedience of one shall many be made righteous.

Romans 1:17 (Righteousness): For therein is the righteousness of God revealed from faith to faith: as it is written, The just shall live by faith.