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Salvation Has Always Been By Faith

Galatians 3:11

11 But that no man is justified by the law in the sight of God, it is evident: for, The just shall live by faith.

Salvation is by grace through faith, and this has always been the case.

How is a man justified before God?

There are only two real attempts to answer that question:

- Through himself
- Through Christ

There is a school of thought that says people in the Old Testament were justified by works (following the Law), and that people since Christ have been justified by grace/faith.

I believe that the Bible clearly teaches that people before the cross got saved just like people after the cross.

Gal 3:11 is very clear. If that was the only verse that taught this truth, it would be enough.

But there are many more verses.

Some would respond that Gal 3:11 is referring to New Testament times only, but Paul was quoting from the Old Testament prophet Habakkuk.

Habakkuk 2:4

4 Behold, his soul which is lifted up is not upright in him: but the just shall live by his faith.

Salvation by faith, apart from the Law was an Old Testament principle.

Romans 3:20

20 Therefore by the deeds of the law there shall no flesh be justified in his sight: for by the law is the knowledge of sin.

The Law shows us that we are sinners, but it doesn't save us.

Because we have the Law we know that we need a Saviour.

Not only did the Law point people to Christ, but the entire Old Testament pointed toward Him.

Luke 24:25-27

25 Then he said unto them, O fools, and slow of heart to believe all that the prophets have spoken:

26 Ought not Christ to have suffered these things, and to enter into his glory?

27 **And beginning at Moses and all the prophets, he expounded unto them in all the scriptures the things concerning himself.**

Luke 24:44-45

44 And he said unto them, These are the words which I spake unto you, while I was yet with you, that all things must be fulfilled, **which were written in the law of Moses, and in the prophets, and in the psalms, concerning me.**

45 Then opened he their understanding, that they might understand the scriptures,

John 1:45

45 Philip findeth Nathanael, and saith unto him, **We have found him, of whom Moses in the law, and the prophets, did write,** Jesus of Nazareth, the son of Joseph.

John 5:46

46 For had ye believed Moses, ye would have believed me: **for he wrote of me.**

Acts 26:22-23

22 Having therefore obtained help of God, I continue unto this day, witnessing both to small and great, **saying none other things than those which the prophets and Moses did say should come:**
23 That Christ should suffer, and that he should be the first that should rise from the dead, and should shew light unto the people, and to the Gentiles.

Those in the Old Testament times did not understand the full implications of what they were reading, but we can see it as we look at the Scriptures.

We can see the planning, as God gave the types and the prophecies that pointed to Christ.

Everything in the temple pointed to Jesus.

The genealogies marked the family line and pointed to Him.

The Israelites were taught that they were sinners and that their sin needed to be cleansed by a sacrifice of blood.

They were also taught that this work was done by one man (the high priest) as he entered the Holy of Holies with the sacrifice.

Leviticus 16:14-17

14 And he shall take of the blood of the bullock, and sprinkle it with his finger upon the mercy seat eastward; and before the mercy seat shall he sprinkle of the blood with his finger seven times.

15 Then shall he kill the goat of the sin offering, that is for the people, and bring his blood within the vail, and do with that blood as he did with the blood of the bullock, and sprinkle it upon the mercy seat, and before the mercy seat:

16 And he shall make an atonement for the holy place, because of the uncleanness of the children of Israel, and because of their transgressions in all their sins: and so shall he do for the tabernacle of the congregation, that remaineth among them in the midst of their uncleanness.

17 And there shall be no man in the tabernacle of the congregation when he goeth in to make an atonement in the holy place, until he come out, and have made an atonement for himself, and for his household, and for all the congregation of Israel.

They saw the shadow, but Jesus was the true sacrifice.

He completed all that was in the Old Testament.

Hebrews 9:11-14

11 But Christ being come an high priest of good things to come, by a greater and more perfect tabernacle, not made with hands, that is to say, not of this building;

12 Neither by the blood of goats and calves, but by his own blood he entered in once into the holy place, having obtained eternal redemption for us.

13 For if the blood of bulls and of goats, and the ashes of an heifer sprinkling the unclean, sanctifieth to the purifying of the flesh:

14 How much more shall the blood of Christ, who through the eternal Spirit offered himself without spot to God, purge your conscience from dead works to serve the living God?

Hebrews 9:24-26

24 For Christ is not entered into the holy places made with hands, which are the figures of the true; but

into heaven itself, now to appear in the presence of God for us:

25 Nor yet that he should offer himself often, as the high priest entereth into the holy place every year with blood of others;

26 For then must he often have suffered since the foundation of the world: but now once in the end of the world hath he appeared to put away sin by the sacrifice of himself.

Hebrews 10:3-4

3 But in those sacrifices there is a remembrance again made of sins every year.

4 **For it is not possible that the blood of bulls and of goats should take away sins.**

Those who say that people in the Old Testament were justified by works fail to remember that the offerings made in the Old Testament could not take away sin.

They showed a person's faith in God through their sacrifice, but their sins were not paid for until Jesus died on the cross.

Abraham is the perfect example of salvation in the Old Testament.

Romans 4:1-3

1 What shall we say then that Abraham our father, as pertaining to the flesh, hath found?

2 For if Abraham were justified by works, he hath whereof to glory; but not before God.

3 For what saith the scripture? Abraham believed God, and it was counted unto him for righteousness.

V3 is referring back to Gen 15:6.

Gen 15:6 And he believed in the LORD; and he counted it to him for righteousness.

The real basis of Abraham's salvation is that Abraham believed God and God saved Abraham.

Because Abraham believed God, God saved his soul!

Abraham could not have been saved by keeping the Law, because he lived over 400 years before the Law was given!

There are many things in the OT that illustrate or point to salvation by grace through faith

Passover

Mercy Seat

City of Refuge

Brazen Serpent

Abraham offering Isaac

1 Peter 1:9-11

9 Receiving the end of your faith, even the salvation of your souls.

10 Of which salvation the prophets have enquired and searched diligently, who prophesied of the grace that should come unto you:

11 Searching what, or what manner of time the Spirit of Christ which was in them did signify, when it testified beforehand the sufferings of Christ, and the glory that should follow.

The entire Old Testament sacrificial system was designed to be representative of Jesus shedding His blood for our sin, for it is through His blood that atonement, justification, redemption, reconciliation, forgiveness, and salvation come

Lev 17:11 For the life of the flesh is in the blood: and I have given it to you upon the altar to make an atonement for your souls: for it is the blood that maketh an atonement for the soul.

Rom 3: 25 Whom God hath set forth to be a propitiation through faith in his blood, to declare his righteousness for the remission of sins that are past, through the forbearance of God;

Romans 5:9 Much more then, being now justified by his blood, we shall be saved from wrath through him.

Eph 1:7 In whom we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of sins, according to the riches of his grace;

Col 1:20 And, having made peace through the blood of his cross, by him to reconcile all things unto himself; by him, I say, whether they be things in earth, or things in heaven.

Heb 9:22 And almost all things are by the law purged with blood; and without shedding of blood is no remission.

I John 1:7 But if we walk in the light, as he is in the light, we have fellowship one with another, and the blood of Jesus Christ his Son cleanseth us from all sin.

Rev 1:5 And from Jesus Christ, who is the faithful witness, and the first begotten of the dead, and the prince of the kings of the earth. Unto him that loved us, and washed us from our sins in his own blood,

Rev 5:9 And they sung a new song, saying, Thou art worthy to take the book, and to open the seals thereof: for thou wast slain, and hast redeemed us to God by thy blood out of every kindred, and tongue, and people, and nation;

The death of Jesus Christ and His shedding of blood for us is the only payment that is acceptable. The Old Testament saints believed God.

They made the animal sacrifices in obedience to God and by faith entrusted themselves to God – even though those sacrifices could not take away sin.

God saw their faith and their payment was made when Jesus died – just as He saw your faith when you trusted Him and applied His blood from the cross.

Whether Old Testament or New Testament, the payment was made by Jesus and the instrument that brings us to Jesus's payment is faith.