

Righteousness (*tsedaqah*) and the commandments

(from Hepner. "The Sacrifices in the Covenant Between the Pieces Allude to the Laws of Leviticus and the Covenant of the Flesh," BN 112 (2002) 38-73)

Why Genesis 15.6 implies keeping the commandments as part of what is being "reckoned" or "counted" as "righteousness":

1. Abram is given two immediate commandments: to bring animals for sacrifice and to circumcise himself and the other males
2. Gen 15.6 alludes to Deuteronomy 6.25: "If we diligently observe this entire commandment before YHWH our God, as he has commanded us, we will be in the right [*tsedaqah*]." [See also Deut 9.4-6]
3. Deuteronomy 5.6 introduces the Decalogue with language like Gen 15.7: "I am YHWH your God, who brought you out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of slavery..." [See also Jeremiah 34.18-19]: thus, the Commandments are always part of the relationship between YHWH and Israel.

"doing" righteousness and justice

GENESIS 18.19: No, for I have chosen him, that he may charge his children and his household after him to keep the way of YHWH by **doing righteousness [*tsedaqah*] and justice [*mishpat*]**; so that YHWH may bring about for Abraham what he has promised him."

ISAIAH 58.2: Yet day after day they seek me and delight to know my ways, as if they were a nation that **practiced righteousness** and did not forsake the ordinance of their God...

JEREMIAH 33.15: In those days and at that time I will cause a **righteous [*tsedaqah*] Branch** to spring up for David; and **he shall execute justice [*mishpat*] and righteousness [*tsedaqah*]** in the land.

PSALM 103.6: YHWH works **vindication [*tsedaqah*] and justice [*mishpat*]** for all who are oppressed