MIQDASH BETHEL COVENANT INSTITUTION

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DOCUMENT 219

Counted as Righteousness

A Covenant Deep Dive into Deuteronomy 6:25 and Its Meaning for Us in This Covenant Relationship

What Does It Mean That Our Obedience Is Called Our Righteousness Before Yahweh?

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REACHING JUDAISM, CHRISTIANITY, AND ISLAM

✡ JUDAISM	✝ CHRISTIANITY	☪ ISLAM
In rabbinic tradition, ***tzedakah*** (צְדָקָה, righteousness) becomes the covenant word for obedient, tangible deeds toward Elohim and neighbor — the fruit by which covenant standing is shown, not the means by which it is purchased.	Christianity inherits a real tension between Bereishit (Genesis) 15:6, where Avraham's belief is counted as righteousness, and Devarim (Deuteronomy) 6:25, where Israel's obedience is counted as righteousness — the historic faith/works debate begins here.	Islam addresses the same tension directly: the Qur'an (2:177) redefines ***al-birr*** (بِرّ, righteousness) as neither ritual alone nor doctrine alone, but ***iman*** (إِيمَان, belief) joined to sustained righteous deeds.

DOCTRINAL AUTHORITY — STANDING RULE OF MIQDASH BETHEL COVENANT INSTITUTION

The sole binding authority of Miqdash Bethel Covenant Institution is the ***Tanakh*** — the written covenant of **Yahweh**. No Talmudic tractate, Church council decree, papal encyclical, hadith collection, or extra-biblical tradition carries doctrinal weight equal to or greater than the written Torah. Where any tradition conflicts with the written covenant, the written covenant governs without exception. The Talmud, New Testament, and Qur'an are cited as historical reference and comparative witness — never as superseding authority. Miqdash Bethel uses the Written Tanakh as its sole source for four reasons: it is the only text Judaism, Christianity, and Islam all recognize as originally given by Yahweh; it predates and underlies the Talmud, New Testament, and Qur'an, so testing those traditions against it follows the evidentiary direction of Devarim (Deuteronomy) 19:15 — the earlier witness governs the later commentary; every later tradition that departs from the Tanakh does so by addition or reinterpretation, never by overturning the text itself, so the text

remains the fixed standard; and Yahweh's own words declare the covenant unchanging (Malachi 3:6; Tehillim (Psalms) 119:89), making the written covenant — not evolving institutional interpretation — the only stable ground for doctrine. All three great covenant traditions — Judaism, Christianity, and Islam — are addressed simultaneously and equally in every Miqdash Bethel document, because Yahweh's covenant belongs to every nation that will receive it.

HOW TO READ THIS DOCUMENT

This document applies the sole authority of the written ***Tanakh***. **Yahweh** and **Elohim** appear in bold throughout. Hebrew book names are given with English in parentheses. Hebrew transliterations appear in ***bold italic*** with English meaning in parentheses at every occurrence. Scripture references are bold. Three audiences are addressed simultaneously: Judaism, Christianity, and Islam. Rabbinic commentary, New Testament texts, and the Qur'an are cited as historical and comparative reference — not as binding authority. The Written Tanakh governs all conclusions.

TANAKH BOOKS CITED IN THIS DOCUMENT

DIVISION	BOOKS CITED	PURPOSE IN THIS STUDY
Torah	Bereishit (Genesis), Shemot (Exodus), Devarim (Deuteronomy)	Foundation text — the covenant catechism of Devarim 6:20–25 and its precedents
Nevi'im (Prophets)	Habakkuk, Yechezkel (Ezekiel), Amos, Micah	Prophetic witness applying covenant righteousness to faith and to justice
Ketuvim (Writings)	Tehillim (Psalms), Mishlei (Proverbs)	Wisdom and liturgical witness to tzedakah as covenant character

I. FRAMING THE QUESTION — THE FATHER-SON CATECHISM OF DEVARIM (DEUTERONOMY) 6:20–25

I-A. The Setting: The Shema and the Household It Was Given To

Devarim (Deuteronomy) 6:25 does not stand alone. It is the closing line of a single covenant unit that begins with the ***Shema*** (שְׁמַע, "hear") of **Devarim (Deuteronomy) 6:4–5**:

"Hear, O Yisra'el (Israel): Yahweh our Elohim, Yahweh is one. And you shall love Yahweh your Elohim with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your might."

The word ***ahavah*** (אַהֲבָה, love) that opens the unit is covenant vocabulary before it is emotional vocabulary — in the Ancient Near Eastern treaty form that Devarim (Deuteronomy) follows throughout, "love" names covenant loyalty owed to a sovereign, not a private feeling. Verses 6–9 command that these words be bound to the hand, placed between the eyes, and written on the doorposts — covenant instruction made physically inseparable from daily life. Verses 20–25 then supply the household mechanism by which that covenant loyalty is transmitted to a generation that did not stand at Sinai.

I-B. The Son's Question and the Father's Answer (6:20–23)

"When your son asks you in time to come, saying, 'What is the meaning of the testimonies, and the statutes, and the judgments, which Yahweh our Elohim has commanded you?' then you shall say to your son, 'We were Pharaoh's slaves in Egypt, and Yahweh brought us out of Egypt with a mighty hand... and Yahweh showed signs and wonders, great and grievous, upon Egypt, upon Pharaoh, and upon all his household, before our eyes; and He brought us out from there, that He might bring us in, to give us the land which He swore to our fathers.'" (Devarim [Deuteronomy] 6:20–23 — JPS 1985, adapted)

The father does not answer a legal question with a legal argument. He answers a question about statutes and judgments with a story — slavery, deliverance, and land-gift. The instruction is anchored to an historical, relational act of **Yahweh** before it is ever presented as a rule. This ordering is the covenant's own logic: obedience is the response to a prior redemption, never the precondition for it. **Yahweh** did not deliver Yisra'el (Israel) from Egypt because they had first kept the commandments — He delivered them while they were still slaves, and the commandments follow as the shape of the relationship that deliverance created.

I-C. The Command and the Promise (6:24–25)

"And Yahweh commanded us to do all these statutes, to fear Yahweh our Elohim, for our good always, that He might preserve us alive, as it is this day. And it will be tzedakah (צְדָקָה) for us, if we observe to do all this commandment before Yahweh our Elohim, as He has commanded us." (Devarim [Deuteronomy] 6:24–25 — JPS 1985, adapted; cf. KJV: "it shall be our righteousness")

Four covenant terms converge in this single verse and govern everything that follows in this document: ***tzedakah*** (righteousness, counted status), ***shamar*** (שָׁמַר, H8104, to keep, guard, observe), ***mitzvah*** (מִצְוָה, H4687, commandment), and ***lifney Yahweh*** (לִפְנֵי Yahweh, H6440, "before Yahweh" — in the presence of, in the sight of, in the court of). This is the question this

document exists to answer: what does it mean that a covenant people's sustained obedience is called their ***tzedakah*** — the very same word the Tanakh uses elsewhere for Avraham's naked, undemonstrated belief?

II. THE HEBREW VOCABULARY OF COVENANT RIGHTEOUSNESS

II-A. Tzedakah (צְדָקָה) — H6666

Tzedakah (צְדָקָה) is built on the root ***tzadaq*** (צ.ד.ק), the same root behind ***tzedek*** (צֶדֶק, H6664, justice/rightness as an abstract standard) and ***tzaddik*** (צַדִּיק, H6662, a righteous person). According to BDB (Brown-Driver-Briggs), the root carries the core sense of conformity to a right standard — rightness in a relationship, in a court case, or in a covenant. ***Tzedakah*** occurs 157 times in the Masoretic Text. Its earliest and dominant use in Torah is relational and forensic, not primarily charitable: it names a status that is either possessed or reckoned within a relationship of accountability. Only in later rabbinic Hebrew does ***tzedakah*** narrow toward "charitable giving" specifically — the Tanakh's own use, including here in **Devarim (Deuteronomy) 6:25**, is broader: it names covenant right-standing itself.

II-B. Shamar (שָׁמַר) — H8104

The verb ***shamar*** (שָׁמַר, H8104) means to keep, guard, watch over, or observe with care. It is the same verb **Yahweh** uses of the cherubim guarding the way to the Tree of Life (**Bereishit [Genesis] 3:24**), and the same verb used of a shepherd guarding a flock. **Devarim (Deuteronomy) 6:25** does not use a weaker word for "obey" — it uses the verb of vigilant, ongoing custodianship. The commandment is something to be guarded the way a treasure or a life is guarded, not a box to be checked once. This is significant for the question this document asks: the ***tzedakah*** of 6:25 is not credited for a single act, as the following section will show it can be, but for a posture of sustained, watchful faithfulness — "if we ***shamar*** (guard, observe with care) to do all this commandment."

II-C. Lifney Yahweh (לִפְנֵי יְהוָה) — "Before Yahweh"

The phrase ***lifney Yahweh*** (לִפְנֵי, H6440 construct, "before/in the face of" + **Yahweh**) is covenant-court language throughout the Torah — it is the language of standing in the presence of a sovereign whose evaluation is the one that counts. The same phrase governs the sacrificial system (offerings brought ***lifney Yahweh***, e.g. **Vayikra [Leviticus] 1:3**) and covenant lawsuits (disputes settled ***lifney Yahweh***, e.g. **Shemot [Exodus] 22:7**). **Devarim (Deuteronomy) 6:25** places Israel's obedience in exactly this location: it is not righteousness measured by the neighbors, by self-assessment, or by comparison to the nations — it is righteousness as it stands ***lifney Yahweh***,

before the One whose covenant it is. This closes off two errors at once: obedience is not self-congratulation, and it is not performance for a human audience. It is answerable only to the covenant Sovereign who gave the commandment in the first place.

III. THREE PICTURES OF TZEDAKAH IN THE TANAKH — BELIEF, ZEAL, AND SUSTAINED OBEDIENCE

The Tanakh applies the identical verb ***chashav*** (חָשַׁב, H2803, to reckon, count, credit) or its cognate constructions to three very different human acts and calls all three ***tzedakah***. Per the **Devarim (Deuteronomy) 19:15** two-or-three-witness standard, no doctrine of covenant righteousness may be built on a single text — these three witnesses must be read together, not selectively.

III-A. Witness One — Bereishit (Genesis) 15:6: Avraham's Belief Counted as Righteousness

"And he believed in Yahweh, and He *vayachsheveha* **(וַיַּחְשְׁבֶהָ, 'and He reckoned it to him') as tzedakah (צְדָקָה)." (Bereishit [Genesis] 15:6)** Avraham has, at this point in the narrative, done nothing but trust a promise he cannot yet see fulfilled — an heir from his own body, and descendants beyond counting. There is no commandment kept in this verse, no ritual performed, no deed of charity. **Yahweh** credits ***tzedakah*** to bare trust in His word. This is the Tanakh's first and most quoted occurrence of the reckoning formula, and it is foundational to every later covenant — Avraham's trust precedes and grounds the Avrahamic covenant of **Bereishit (Genesis) 17**.

III-B. Witness Two — Tehillim (Psalms) 106:30–31: Pinchas's Zealous Act Counted as Righteousness

"Then Pinchas (Phinehas) stood up and intervened, and the plague was checked. And it was *vateichashev* **(וַתֶּחָשֶׁב, 'and it was reckoned') to him as tzedakah, from generation to generation forever." (Tehillim [Psalms] 106:30–31)** The background is **Bemidbar (Numbers) 25:1–13**: Israel's idolatry with Ba'al Pe'or, a plague underway, and Pinchas's decisive single act halting it. Unlike Avraham's quiet trust, this is one dramatic, public, and violent act of covenant zeal — and it too is called ***tzedakah***, credited to him "from generation to generation," with a **covenant of peace** and a perpetual priesthood granted as its consequence (**Bemidbar [Numbers] 25:12–13**). Between Witness One and Witness Two, the Tanakh has already credited ***tzedakah*** to both an internal disposition of trust and an external, singular, decisive deed.

III-C. Witness Three — Devarim (Deuteronomy) 6:25: Israel's Sustained Obedience Counted as Righteousness

Set beside the first two witnesses, **Devarim (Deuteronomy) 6:25** supplies a third and distinct shape of ***tzedakah***: not a single moment of trust, and not a single decisive act, but ongoing, generational ***shamar*** (שָׁמַר) — "if we observe to do **all** this commandment" continually, ***lifney Yahweh***, as a whole way of life. The covenant does not choose between crediting belief, crediting zeal, or crediting obedience. It credits all three, in different narrative moments, because covenant ***tzedakah*** is not a single transaction but the whole shape of a life lived in trust that expresses itself in loyalty and, where called for, in decisive action.

III-D. Resolving the False Choice

Read in isolation, **Bereishit (Genesis) 15:6** and **Devarim (Deuteronomy) 6:25** appear to set up a contest between faith and works that has occupied theologians for millennia (see Section VI). Read together with **Tehillim (Psalms) 106:31** as the required third witness, the contest dissolves. The covenant does not ask "which one counts?" It asks: is this a real relationship? Avraham's trust in **Bereishit (Genesis) 15** is not abstract — it is trust that he will in fact act on, walking out of Ur, offering Yitzchak (Isaac), and keeping **Yahweh**'s charge (**Bereishit [Genesis] 26:5**, where **Yahweh** tells Yitzchak that Avraham "kept My charge, My commandments, My statutes, and My laws"). Pinchas's zeal in **Bemidbar (Numbers) 25** is not self-generated — it flows from the same covenant loyalty that Devarim 6:5 calls Israel to love **Yahweh** with all the heart. And Israel's sustained obedience in **Devarim (Deuteronomy) 6:25** is explicitly grounded, in the very same paragraph, in **Yahweh**'s prior act of deliverance from Egypt (6:21–23) — obedience as response, not obedience as purchase. ***Tzedakah*** is covenant relationship made visible, whatever form that visibility takes: trust, zeal, or lifelong faithfulness.

IV. FIVE FURTHER COVENANT WITNESSES TO TZEDAKAH

Per the **Devarim (Deuteronomy) 19:15** standard, the following five additional witnesses corroborate that the Tanakh consistently holds trust and obedience together as a single covenant fabric rather than as competitors.

Witness One — Habakkuk 2:4: The Righteous Shall Live by His Emunah

"Behold, his soul is puffed up, it is not upright in him; but the tzaddik (צַדִּיק, righteous one) shall live by his emunah (אֱמוּנָה, H530, faithfulness/steadfast trust)." (Habakkuk 2:4)
Emunah here is not a single act of intellectual assent — the Hebrew noun form denotes steadiness, reliability, a faithfulness sustained over time (from the same root as ***amen***). The ***tzaddik***'s life is characterized by trust that endures, precisely the same durability that **Devarim (Deuteronomy) 6:25**'s ***shamar*** requires. Trust and sustained faithfulness are one motion in this verse, not two.

Witness Two — Tehillim (Psalms) 119:172: All Your Commandments Are Righteousness

"My tongue shall speak of Your word, for all Your commandments are tzedek (צֶדֶק)." (Tehillim [Psalms] 119:172) The psalmist does not say the commandments merely produce or reward righteousness — he says they **are** righteous, in their content. The statutes are not an arbitrary test imposed on an otherwise neutral world; they are Yahweh's own righteous character expressed in instruction. Keeping them is therefore not earning an external reward but aligning with what is already, objectively, right.

Witness Three — Yechezkel (Ezekiel) 18:5, 9: The Individual Righteous by His Deeds

"If a man is a tzaddik, and does what is lawful and right... he keeps My statutes and observes My judgments faithfully — he is a tzaddik; he shall surely live, says Yahweh Elohim." (Yechezkel [Ezekiel] 18:5, 9, adapted) Yechezkel (Ezekiel) 18 overturns the proverb "the fathers have eaten sour grapes, and the children's teeth are set on edge" (18:2) — covenant righteousness is not inherited status but a life examined for its own conduct, generation by generation. This chapter directly parallels **Devarim (Deuteronomy) 6:20–25**'s father-to-son structure: each generation must be found ***lifney Yahweh*** on its own covenant footing.

Witness Four — Mishlei (Proverbs) 21:3: Justice and Judgment Above Sacrifice

"To do tzedakah (righteousness) and mishpat (justice) is more acceptable to Yahweh than sacrifice." (Mishlei [Proverbs] 21:3) This proverb guards against a different error than legalism — the error of ritual substitution, in which sacrificial performance is offered in place of a righteous life. ***Tzedakah*** is here paired directly with ***mishpat*** (justice toward others), anchoring covenant righteousness in how the covenant member treats the vulnerable, not merely in cultic correctness.

Witness Five — Amos 5:24: Let Justice Roll Down Like Waters

"But let mishpat (justice) roll down like waters, and tzedakah (righteousness) like an ever-flowing stream." (Amos 5:24) Delivered against a nation performing feast days and sacrifices while oppressing the poor (Amos 5:21–23), this verse insists that ***tzedakah*** must be a continual, flowing, active reality — not a static credential claimed once and set aside. It stands in direct continuity with the ***shamar*** of **Devarim (Deuteronomy) 6:25**: an ever-flowing stream, not a single act of ritual compliance.

V. THE COVENANT DANGER ON BOTH SIDES — BECHIRAH AND THE TWO WAYS TO MISREAD 6:25

V-A. The Danger of Legalism: Turning Tzedakah into Wages

Devarim (Deuteronomy) 6:25 can be misread as a wage contract: perform the commandments, earn the credit. But the verse's own placement resists this reading. The command in 6:24–25 follows, and is grounded in, the historical narrative of 6:20–23 — Yahweh's unearned deliverance from Egyptian slavery. Israel did not obey its way out of Egypt; Yahweh delivered a still-disobedient, still-enslaved people by His own initiative (cf. **Yechezkel [Ezekiel] 20:5–9**, where Yahweh acts for the sake of His own Name even while Israel still clung to Egypt's idols). Obedience in 6:25 is a covenant response to a prior, gracious act — not the purchase price of that act. This is the same danger addressed by Doc 148's treatment of the friends of Iyov (Job): reducing the covenant to a transactional ledger misreads Yahweh's own character.

V-B. The Danger of Antinomianism: Detaching Tzedakah from Bechirah

The opposite error detaches ***tzedakah*** from the covenant member's own ***bechirah*** (בְּחִירָה, free choice — see Doc 148, Section II-C) altogether, treating obedience as optional decoration on a status secured entirely apart from conduct. **Devarim (Deuteronomy) 6:25** will not permit this either: the ***tzedakah*** it describes is explicitly conditional — "**if** we observe to do all this commandment." The same ***bechirah*** that Doc 148 identifies as the foundation of covenant accountability in **Devarim (Deuteronomy) 30:19** ("choose life") is active here. A covenant relationship in which the human party's choices carry no weight is not a covenant; it is a monologue. **Devarim (Deuteronomy) 6:25** insists the relationship is bilateral even though it was unilaterally initiated by grace.

V-C. The Resolution: Tzedakah as the Shape of a Working Relationship, Not a Transaction on Either Side

The Tanakh's own three witnesses in Section III already model the resolution. Avraham's trust in **Bereishit (Genesis) 15:6** is credited before any command has yet been given to test it fully — grace precedes performance. But that same Avraham is later commended precisely because "he kept My charge, My commandments, My statutes, and My laws" (**Bereishit [Genesis] 26:5**) — trust that did not remain inert. **Devarim (Deuteronomy) 6:25** describes the mature, ongoing form of exactly this pattern applied to the whole covenant nation: a people already redeemed (6:21–23), called to respond with sustained, watchful loyalty (6:24–25a), evaluated by the covenant Sovereign Himself (***lifney Yahweh***, 6:25b). Righteousness is not earned by the obedience and it is not indifferent to the obedience — it is the visible shape of a covenant relationship that is actually functioning as designed.

VI. THREE-RELIGION AUDIT — HOW EACH TRADITION HANDLES FAITH, WORKS, AND RIGHTEOUSNESS

ELEMENT	JUDAISM	CHRISTIANITY	ISLAM
Primary Text	Devarim (Deuteronomy) 6:25 read alongside 613 mitzvot; rabbinic tradition (Rambam, ***Mishneh Torah***) develops ***tzedakah*** into an ethical-legal obligation owed regardless of feeling.	Bereishit (Genesis) 15:6 becomes central to Pauline theology (Romans 4; Galatians 3) as the ground of "justification by faith"; James 2:14–26 insists "faith without works is dead," citing the same Avraham.	Qur'an 2:177 (***al-birr***, righteousness) explicitly redefines righteousness away from ritual direction alone toward belief joined with charity, prayer, promise-keeping, and endurance.
Covenant Strength	Refuses to separate belief from deed — ***tzedakah*** is deliberately used for both inner disposition and concrete act, preserving the Tanakh's own unity.	Preserves the Tanakh's witness that trust precedes and grounds covenant standing (Genesis 15:6), guarding against pure legalism.	Preserves the Tanakh's witness that righteousness must be visible in concrete deeds toward the vulnerable (echoing Mishlei 21:3, Amos 5:24), guarding against pure ritualism.
Covenant Departure	Where obedience to mitzvot is treated as itself meritorious apart from the trust that Devarim 6:20–23 grounds it in, the transactional error of Section V-A reappears.	Where "faith alone" is read to sever obedience from covenant righteousness entirely, it collides directly with the conditional "if" of Devarim 6:25 and with James 2:24's citation of the very same Avraham as "justified by works."	Where ***al-birr*** is reduced to a checklist of the five deeds named in 2:177 without the internal ***iman*** (belief) the verse places first, the same transactional error reappears in a different vocabulary.
Covenant Witness	Tehillim (Psalms) 106:31 and Devarim (Deuteronomy) 6:25 together show the Tanakh crediting ***tzedakah*** to zeal and to sustained obedience — an internal Tanakh precedent for holding trust and deed together, prior to any later tradition's formulation.	Romans 4 and James 2 can both be read, without contradiction, as commentary on the same single Tanakh pattern already present across Bereishit 15:6, Bemidbar 25, and Devarim 6:25 — the New Testament dispute is a dispute about emphasis within a unity the Tanakh itself already holds.	Qur'an 2:177's own structure — ***iman*** named first, deeds named second, as evidence and outworking — mirrors Devarim 6:20–23's structure of grace-narrative first, commandment second.

VII. WHAT THIS MEANS FOR US IN THIS COVENANT RELATIONSHIP

VII-A. Our Obedience Is Not a Transaction — It Is the Shape of the Relationship

For Miqdash Bethel, the practical weight of **Devarim (Deuteronomy) 6:25** is this: when we keep the covenant — when we hold to the sole authority of the Written Tanakh, when we deal honestly, when we love **Yahweh** and our neighbor — we are not accumulating credit against a debt, and we are not performing for one another's approval. We are being found ***lifney Yahweh*** in the condition the relationship was designed to produce. The obedience is the evidence the relationship is alive, not the fee for admission to it. This is the same posture Doc 148 identifies in Iyov (Job): the covenant answer is never "explain the transaction," it is "here is the relationship, functioning or not functioning, before Yahweh Himself."

VII-B. The Household Pattern Still Applies — We Are the Fathers Now

Devarim (Deuteronomy) 6:20–25 assumes a son will ask, one day, what these statutes mean — and it assumes the household will have an answer ready that begins with what **Yahweh** has already done, not with a list of rules recited without context. Every household and every covenant community within Miqdash Bethel stands in the position of that father. The instruction is not: hand the next generation a rulebook. The instruction is: tell them the story of deliverance first, and let the commandment arrive as the shape of gratitude and loyalty that the story itself generates. A covenant kept ***lifney Yahweh*** but never narrated to the next generation is a covenant one generation from being forgotten.

VII-C. Neither Earning Nor Indifference — A Third Way

Two temptations run through every covenant community across all three religious traditions addressed in this document. The first is to treat obedience as currency — to believe that enough correct performance purchases Yahweh's favor, a belief the very grammar of Devarim 6:20–23 refutes before 6:25 is even reached. The second is to treat covenant standing as untouchable by conduct — a belief the conditional "if we observe to do" in 6:25 refutes just as directly. The covenant relationship Devarim 6:25 describes for us is a third way: a redeemed people, already delivered by grace, whose sustained, watchful faithfulness ***lifney Yahweh*** is credited as exactly what it looks like — tzedakah, a right relationship being lived out, not a right relationship being purchased or a right relationship that tolerates neglect.

VII-D. The Test for Us: Are We Being Found Lifney Yahweh?

The practical application for Miqdash Bethel is a standing question, not a settled score: not "have we accumulated enough tzedakah," but "if Yahweh examined our household, our institution, and our individual walk today, ***lifney Yahweh*** — in His own presence, by His own standard — would He find a people who trust Him the way Avraham did, who act with the covenant zeal Pinchas did when the moment called for it, and who keep faith the way Devarim 6:25 describes, day upon day,

generation upon generation?" That question, asked honestly and repeatedly, is what it means for us to live inside this covenant relationship rather than merely study it.

VIII. SEVEN COVENANT DECLARATIONS ON TZEDAKAH AND THE COVENANT RELATIONSHIP

#	COVENANT DECLARATION	BASIS
I	**Covenant righteousness (tzedakah) is credited to trust, to covenant zeal, and to sustained obedience alike — the Tanakh unites all three rather than setting them against one another.**	**Bereishit (Genesis) 15:6; Tehillim (Psalms) 106:30–31; Devarim (Deuteronomy) 6:25**
II	**Obedience in Devarim 6:24–25 is grounded in Yahweh's prior, unearned deliverance from Egypt — covenant response, never covenant purchase.**	**Devarim (Deuteronomy) 6:20–23**
III	**The commandment is something to be shamar — guarded and watched over continually — not a single transaction to be completed and set aside.**	**Devarim (Deuteronomy) 6:25; Bereishit (Genesis) 3:24**
IV	**Covenant righteousness is evaluated lifney Yahweh — before Yahweh Himself — not by human comparison, self-assessment, or the approval of others.**	**Devarim (Deuteronomy) 6:25; Vayikra (Leviticus) 1:3**
V	**Every generation stands on its own covenant footing and must be told the story of deliverance before it is handed the commandment.**	**Devarim (Deuteronomy) 6:20–21; Yechezkel (Ezekiel) 18:5,9**
VI	**Tzedakah must flow continually, like an ever-flowing stream, expressed toward Yahweh in trust and toward neighbor in justice — not claimed once as a static credential.**	**Amos 5:24; Mishlei (Proverbs) 21:3**
VII	**The covenant relationship is bilateral though unilaterally initiated: Yahweh's grace comes first, and the covenant member's bechirah (free choice) to remain faithful is neither erased by that grace nor the price of it.**	**Devarim (Deuteronomy) 30:19; 6:24–25**

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Habakkuk 2:4	The righteous shall live by his emunah	**IV / W1**
Tehillim (Psalms) 106:30–31	Pinchas's zeal counted as tzedakah forever	**III-B**
Tehillim (Psalms) 119:172	All Your commandments are tzedek	**IV / W2**
Mishlei (Proverbs) 21:3	Tzedakah and justice above sacrifice	**IV / W4**
Yechezkel (Ezekiel) 18:5,9	The individual tzaddik by his own deeds	**IV / W3**
Yechezkel (Ezekiel) 20:5–9	Yahweh acts for His own Name's sake despite Israel's idolatry	**V-A**

"And it will be tzedakah for us, if we observe to do all this commandment before Yahweh our Elohim, as He has commanded us."

Devarim (Deuteronomy) 6:25 — The Written Covenant of Yahweh

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