

The Epistle To The Romans (Chapter Four)

OBJECTIVES IN STUDYING THIS CHAPTER

- 1) To understand how Abraham was justified in God's sight
- 2) To see that the "righteousness" God imputes to man is actually justification (i.e., forgiveness)
- 3) To comprehend the nature of justifying faith by considering the example of Abraham.

SUMMARY

Having declared that God's righteousness is to be found in a system involving justification by faith and not by keeping the works of any law, Paul provides evidence by referring to Abraham's example. In considering the justification of Abraham, Paul quotes **Genesis 15:6** where it is stated that Abraham's faith was accounted to him for righteousness (**1-3**). Abraham trusted in God, not in his own works, and through such faith experienced the righteousness (forgiveness) expressed by David in **Psalms 31:1,2, (4-8)**. To demonstrate that God's righteousness by faith is offered to both Jew and Gentile, Paul again appeals to Abraham's example. Abraham's faith was accounted for righteousness prior to receiving circumcision, which was in itself a seal of the righteousness of the faith he had while uncircumcised. Thus He serves as a father of all who believe, whether circumcised or not (**9-12**). Paul then reminds them that the promise that Abraham was to be "a father of many nations" was given in light of his faith, not through some law, so that the promise might be according to grace and sure to those who have the same kind of faith as Abraham (**13-17**). Finally, the nature of Abraham's obedient faith is illustrated (**18-22**), with the explanation it was preserved to reassure us that we who have the same kind faith in God who raised Jesus will find our faith accounted for righteousness in the same way (**23-25**).

OUTLINE

I. JUSTIFICATION OF ABRAHAM AS AN EXAMPLE (1-8)

A. HOW ABRAHAM WAS JUSTIFIED (1-5)

1. If by works, then he could boast (**1-2**)
2. The Scriptures reveal it was by his faith in God (**3**)
 - a. One who trusts in works, seeks God's debt, not His grace (**4**)
 - b. When one trusts in God to justify him, such faith is counted for righteousness (**5**)

B. THE TESTIMONY OF DAVID (6-8)

1. Even David spoke of God imputing righteousness apart from works (**6**)
2. Blessed are those against whom God does not impute sins (**7-8**)

II. RIGHTEOUSNESS BY FAITH AVAILABLE TO ALL BELIEVERS (9-25)

A. BECAUSE ABRAHAM WAS JUSTIFIED BEFORE CIRCUMCISION (9-12)

1. His faith was counted for righteousness before he was circumcised (**9-10**)
2. Circumcision was a seal of the righteousness he had while uncircumcised (**11a**)
3. Thus he became the father of all who have the same kind of faith, both circumcised and uncircumcised (**11b-12**)

B. BECAUSE THE PROMISE WAS GRANTED THROUGH FAITH (13-25)

1. The promise to Abraham to be the heir of the world given in view of his faith (**13**)
2. It was not given through law, but in light of faith, according to grace, to assure that all who are of the same faith as Abraham might be heirs of the promise (**14-17**)
3. The kind of obedient faith illustrated by Abraham (**18-22**)

4. Abraham's justification by faith assures that we who believe in Him who raised Jesus from the dead shall find justification (23-25)

Key Word For Chapter 4

Impute - "to reckon, take into account, or, metaphorically, to put down to a person's account"

Righteousness - as used in this chapter, the idea seems to be akin that of "justification", where one is declared "not guilty" (see **Romans 4:5-8**)

REVIEW QUESTIONS FOR THE CHAPTER

1) List the main points of this chapter

- Justification Of Abraham As An Example (1-8)
- Righteousness By Faith Available To All Believers (9-25)

2) How did Abraham attain righteousness? (3-5)

- By believing in God to justify the ungodly (and not in his own works)

3) How does David describe the righteousness which is imputed to man? (6-8)

- In the sense that man's sins are not counted against him

4) How is Abraham the father of the uncircumcised who possess faith? (9-11)

- By his being justified by faith prior to his circumcision

5) Based upon what was the promise made to Abraham? (13)

- The righteousness of faith

6) How did Abraham demonstrate his faith? (19-21)

- By fathering Isaac

7) For whose sake was the example of Abraham's faith written? (23-24)

- Those who believe that God raised Jesus from the dead