

## ROMANS 4:1-25

### A QUICK REVIEW FROM OUR LAST LESSON:

1. Apostle Paul started to introduce this act of justification in the last verses of Romans 3. Because of the new dispensational change Paul has been given by Jesus Christ, now the righteousness of God without the Law has been witnessed.

Romans 3:26-31 - To declare, *I say*, at this time his righteousness: that he might be just, and the justifier of him which believeth in Jesus. Rom 3:27 Where *is* boasting then? It is excluded. By what law? of works? Nay: but by the law of faith. Rom 3:28 Therefore we conclude that a man is justified by faith without the deeds of the law. Rom 3:29 *Is he* the God of the Jews only? *is he* not also of the Gentiles? Yes, of the Gentiles also: Rom 3:30 Seeing *it is* one God, which shall justify the circumcision by faith, and uncircumcision through faith. Rom 3:31 Do we then make void the law through faith? God forbid: yea, we establish the law.

2. We now know that in "time past" there was a faith + works; whereas, today it is by grace through faith alone.
3. Both verses of Romans 3:28 & 29 are very important, because Paul gives a new time revelation of being justified.

\*Paul now tells us that all men are justified through faith only and not of works. Paul gives more details in Chapter 4.

## ROMANS 4

Romans 4:1 - What shall we say then that Abraham our father, as pertaining to the flesh, hath found?

1. In order for

Paul to get his Jewish brethren to listen about the new grace message, Paul mentions two O.T. patriarchs that they would be very familiar with (Abraham and David). Then he would have their attention.

2. Paul, knowing the difficulty the Jews had in accepting the basis of justification by faith alone, begins to use Jewish examples of Abraham's and David's testimonies of faith.
3. Here in verse 1, Paul asks what Abraham learned about the flesh.

\*The lesson that Abraham learned about the works of the flesh is that looking to the flesh's works you might get the praise of men, but God would not accept or honor the works of the flesh by boasting about it. We see this in Romans 4:2.

Romans 4:2 - For if Abraham were justified by works, he hath *whereof* to glory; but not before God.

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Abraham found out that God would not accept the works of the flesh by boasting about it. No one will be able to boast before God. Just look at what Ephesians 2:9 says - *Not of works, lest any man should boast.*

Romans 4:3 - For what saith the scripture? Abraham believed God, and it was counted unto him for righteousness.

1. Romans 4:3 shows the Jews that were listening how Abraham became accepted before God by quoting an O.T. scripture.

Genesis 12:1-3 - Now the LORD had said unto Abram, Get thee out of thy country, and from thy kindred, and from thy father's house, unto a land that I will shew thee: Gen 12:2 And I will make of thee a great nation, and I will bless thee, and make thy name great; and thou shalt be a blessing: Gen 12:3 And I will bless them that bless thee, and curse him that curseth thee: and in thee shall all families of the earth be blessed.

2. God had made Abraham a promise that when he left Ur, he would receive a new land and God would make of him a great nation. We know this as the "Abrahamic Covenant".
3. In Genesis 15:5-6, God promises a child would be born to Abraham by Sarah. Abraham, by faith, believed in what God had promised.

Genesis 15:5-6 - And he brought him forth abroad, and said, Look now toward heaven, and tell the stars, if thou be able to number them: and he said unto him, So shall thy seed be. Gen 15:6 And he believed in the LORD; and he counted it to him for righteousness.

4. God revealed Himself to Abraham and promised him an unlimited number of his seed would be a great nation and nations because of his righteousness. In other words, Abraham was justified by faith. Works had nothing to do with it.
1. This now brings us to the contrast between works and faith to the plan of one's salvation - starting in Romans 4:4-5.

Romans 4:4-5 - Now to him that worketh is the reward not reckoned of grace, but of debt. Rom 4:5 But to him that worketh not, but believeth on him that justifieth the ungodly, his faith is counted for righteousness.

2. Wages are earned by doing work for someone to pay off debt that you have acquired in life. These verses show the difference between grace and works (complete opposites).
3. Works removes grace from salvation. We find that our justification is by "faith alone". Faith is not a work performed to earn righteousness, but this means God imputed the righteousness of Jesus Christ to us - only by believing in Christ's accomplishments of the cross.
1. Now, in these verses, we see Paul bringing David into the picture for his Jewish brethren.
2. David was the second most esteemed man in Israel's history. The words "Even as", at the beginning of this verse indicates that David's experience was the same as Abraham's.

Romans 4:6-8 - Even as David also describeth the blessedness of the man, unto whom God imputeth righteousness without works, Rom 4:7 *Saying, Blessed are they whose iniquities are forgiven, and whose sins are covered.* Rom 4:8 *Blessed is the man to whom the Lord will not impute sin.*

3. Paul quotes Psalms 32:1-2 - *Blessed is he whose transgression is forgiven, whose sin is covered. Psa 32:2* *Blessed is the man unto whom the LORD imputeth not iniquity, and in whose spirit there is no guile.*

\*So what did Paul see in these two verses?

- a. First of all, he noticed that David said nothing about "works" - forgiveness is a matter of God's grace - not man's efforts.
- b. Second, he saw that if God doesn't impute sin to a person (no sin), then that person must have a righteous standing before God.

- c. Third, he saw that God justifies the ungodly - What? David had been guilty of adultery and murder, but we learn that David had been forgiven of his sins by God's grace.
3. David illustrates the issues of total forgiveness because under grace, we have a total, absolute forgiveness of past, present and future sins.

Colossians 2:13 - And you, being dead in your sins and the uncircumcision of your flesh, hath he quickened together with him, having forgiven you all trespasses;

\*\*TO SUMMARIZE WHAT WE HAVE LEARNED FROM ROMANS 4:1-8:

1. That Abraham was justified, having imputed righteousness to his account because of his faith (Gen. 12 & Genesis 15:5-6).
2. We learned that David had been forgiven of his sins by God's grace. David did not understand how, but we understand because of the "but now" revelation that David's sins were totally forgiven because of Christ's cross. Sin would never be written down (imputed) on his account against him.
3. As this is true of Abraham and David, today the basic truth of the grace message is that we have absolute and total forgiveness.

Romans 6:14 - For sin shall not have dominion over you: for ye are not under the law, but under grace.

1. In Romans 4:9, we see the gift of the blessedness given.

Romans 4:9 - *Cometh* this blessedness then upon the circumcision *only*, or upon the uncircumcision also? for we say that faith was reckoned to Abraham for righteousness.

2. This righteousness was not just for the Jews under Law, but also the Gentiles - it is to all who believe.

Romans 3:30 - Seeing *it is* one God, which shall justify the circumcision by faith, and uncircumcision through faith.

1. In Romans 4:10, Paul gives us an historical fact where Abraham was justified (Gen. 15:5-6) before he

Romans 4:10 - How was it then reckoned? when he was in circumcision, or in uncircumcision? Not in circumcision, but in uncircumcision.

was ever circumcised in Genesis 17. (There are 15+ years between Gen. 15 & Gen. 17.)

2. If the father of the nation of Israel could be justified while he was still uncircumcised, then the question is, "Why can't other uncircumcised people be justified?"

Answer: Abraham was justified as an uncircumcised person just like we are today - his faith was accounted to him for righteousness.

3. Abraham was saved in a very special manner and it was in this circumstance that God had us (the Gentiles) in view here - the future Dispensation of Grace period.

Romans 4:11-12 - And he received the sign of circumcision, a seal of the righteousness of the faith which *he had yet* being uncircumcised: that he might be the father of all them that believe, though they be not circumcised; that righteousness might be imputed to them also: Rom 4:12 And the father of circumcision to them who are not of the circumcision only, but who also walk in the steps of that faith of our father Abraham, which *he had* being *yet* uncircumcised.

1. In Romans 4:11-12, we see the "seal of righteousness" in the faith.
2. Abraham had received the sign of circumcision and had the "seal of righteousness", or the expression of faith.  
  
\*Circumcision did not justify Abraham. It was a sign-token to identify something. It means - "a death to the flesh". Paul describes this in Romans 2:28-29 - *For he is not a Jew, which is one outwardly; neither is that circumcision, which is outward in the flesh: Rom 2:29 But he is a Jew, which is one inwardly; and circumcision is that of the heart, in the spirit, and not in the letter; whose praise is not of men, but of God.*
3. Abraham became the father of the circumcision and the believing uncircumcision. Abraham became a dual fathership - the father to the circumcision by the covenant given to him under the prophetic program and to the believing Gentiles in the "But now" dispensation of grace.

Romans 4:13 - For the promise, that he should be the heir of the world, *was* not to Abraham, or to his seed, through the law, but through the righteousness of faith.

1. In Romans 4:13, we see the promise given to all believers. This promise is given to the Jews and the Gentiles - the righteousness of God given not by the law, but by faith.  
  
Galatians 3:6-7 - Even as Abraham believed God, and it was accounted to him for righteousness. Gal 3:7 Know ye therefore that they which are of faith, the same are the children of Abraham.
2. If the Jews can, then we can also have the promise - the promise of eternal life. The Gentiles had to be the seed of Abraham also, not by the works of the law - but by faith.
3. Romans 3 demonstrates how God can declare us righteous by faith in Christ's finished work. Here in Chapter 4, we see Paul dealing with the subject of inheritance of an "eternal life", the promise that now we are included with this eternal life.
1. Romans 4:14-15 talks about the Law. The Jews say keeping the law makes them heirs, but Paul says that would make faith obsolete.

Romans 4:14-15 - For if they which are of the law *be* heirs, faith is made void, and the promise made of none effect: Rom 4:15 Because the law worketh wrath: for where no law is, *there is* no transgression.

Galatians 2:21 - I do not frustrate the grace of God: for if righteousness *come* by the law, then Christ is dead in vain.

2. Salvation is either law or promise (faith). It cannot be both! Just as it cannot be grace and works.  
  
Romans 11:6 - And if by grace, then *is it* no more of works: otherwise grace is no more grace. But if *it be* of works, then is it no more grace: otherwise work is no more work.
3. The law never saves, but only makes sinners more guilty of sin.
1. Paul says that because the law cannot save us, then it cannot give us the inheritance of eternal life. We have this security by being in Christ and His seed.

Romans 4:16 - Therefore *it is* of faith, that *it might be* by grace; to the end the promise might be sure to all the seed; not to that only which is of the law, but to that also which is of the faith of Abraham; who is the father of us all,

2. By faith, we receive our salvation and not by works or any human effort - only through grace. We then cannot lose it!! This is our assurance.

**\*\*Paul finishes out Chapter 4 talking about "The Miracle".**

Romans 4:17-18 - (As it is written, I have made thee a father of many nations,) before him whom he believed, *even* God, who quickeneth the dead, and calleth those things which be not as though they were. Rom 4:18 Who against hope believed in hope, that he might become the father of many nations, according to that which was spoken, So shall thy seed be.

1. Even though Abraham physically was past the age for having children (his body being dead to childbearing), God miraculously touched his body and made it come to life again and have seed.
2. Add to this: When Christ sets up His Kingdom, the nations will be submissive to Israel and father Abraham will be involved because Christ is the seed of Abraham.

Matthew 1:1 - The book of the generation of Jesus Christ, the son of David, the son of Abraham.

3. Abraham's faith believed everything God promised him, even though everything looked like it was impossible to happen.
1. In verse 19, Abraham's body was functionally dead, but he is not dead.

Romans 4:19-22 - And being not weak in faith, he considered not his own body now dead, when he was about an hundred years old, neither yet the deadness of Sara's womb: Rom 4:20 He staggered not at the promise of God through unbelief; but was strong in faith, giving glory to God; Rom 4:21 And being fully persuaded that, what he had promised, he was able also to perform. Rom 4:22 And therefore it was imputed to him for righteousness.

2. In verse 20, he knew inwardly he could not function, but his faith is strong.
3. In verse 21, Abraham had made up his mind and was persuaded that God would keep His promise.
4. In verse 22, because these things were true, Abraham trusted God.
1. Paul applies the issue to you and me, not just to Abraham. It is written to us also, we are of the children of

Romans 4:23-25 - Now it was not written for his sake alone, that it was imputed to him; Rom 4:24 But for us also, to whom it shall be imputed, if we believe on him that raised up Jesus our Lord from the dead; Rom 4:25 Who was delivered for our offences, and was raised again for our justification.

Abraham in verses 23 and 24.

2. In verse 25, Christ was "raised for our justification" and delivered for our offences. This is for all who believe and have faith in Christ's finished work (D.B.R.). God imputes righteousness to our account.

Romans 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;

3. God set Christ forth as a fully satisfying sacrifice, to pay the penalty of our sins. This is the cause of our justification - how we can be justified.

**\*\*\*Coming: Chapter 5 will explain the benefits of justification in the believer's life.**