

Ladies Bible Study

week 9

(Week 8 in your lessons)

November 4, 2025

Last Week:

- New words
- Justification vs. Acquittal
- "But now"
- "At this time"
- "Witnessed by Law and Prophets"
- Faith in Christ vs. Faith of Christ

This Week:

- Abrahamic Covenant
- Davidic Covenant
- Works are not a part of justification
- Romans vs. James



Romans 4:1-12

Realizing the difficulty of inducing the Jew to accept the principle of justification by faith alone, the Apostle now commences to demonstrate his point by referring to the Jews' _____ scriptures regarding two outstanding personalities from their own history: Abraham and David.

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

Even though the Jewish believers in Rome knew that Abraham was their ancestor, Paul refreshes their minds, and for the sake of the Gentile converts, explains that he was the father of the Jews. We need to recognize that Abraham simply believed what God said, and as a consequence, he learned that God counted it unto him for righteousness -

Galatians 3:6 - Even as Abraham believed God, and it was counted to him for righteousness.

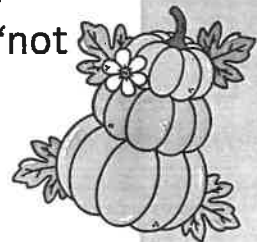
This verse indicates that Abraham did not believe God in order to become _____, but having believed God, he discovered that God imputed it to him for righteousness.

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

Continuing the thought of the previous verse, Paul says, if Abraham found that he was justified of works, "he hath whereof to glory." In other words, if through his encounter with God, Abraham discovered that he was justified out of the source of works, he had reason and ground to boast and brag.

For the sake of argument, Paul says, if we grant that Abraham was justified out of works and had reason for boasting, we must emphatically affirm that his justification and boasting was "not before God."

The Abrahamic Covenant promised a _____ and a _____ to dwell upon it, while the Davidic Covenant promised a kingdom for an everlasting King as its ruler. Thus in the four "gospels" we have a King who is to reign as head of a kingdom over a nation in a land - the land of Canaan.



However, the Bible relates how Israel rejected the King and His kingdom. As a result the nation was driven out of the land _____ to her. The establishment of this kingdom was – and is now – held in a temporary state of suspension until a future time, after the present dispensation of grace shall have been brought to a close.

The Case of Abraham:

A teacher once asked a class of boys: “who is the most honored, most respected, most loved man of all history?” With one accord the answered: “Jesus!” How wrong they were! The Lord Jesus Christ should indeed be loved and honored by all, but alas, millions despise Him and many even hate Him, while His name is taken in vein on every hand.

Without doubt, the most honored, most respected, most loved man in all of history is Abraham. Even today Abraham is revered as the “father” of :

More than 15,000,000 Jews,
More than 550,000,000 _____, and
More than 1,000,000,000 professing Christians.



As God chose Paul to demonstrate His grace to sinners, so he chose Abraham to demonstrate justification by faith.

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

Having purposed (as Abraham did not yet know) that Christ would die as the satisfaction for man’s sin, God said of Abraham, as it were: “He believes Me. I will honor his faith and count him righteous.” Abraham’s justification was not the result of his _____ anything; it was rather the result of his simple faith in God and His Word. Otherwise it would not have been “of grace” but “of debt.”

It should be carefully noted in connection with Gen. 15:6, the passage which Paul quotes here, that this passage does not say that Abraham looked forward in faith to a coming Christ to be saved.

The whole passage (Gen. 15:2-6) clearly indicates that Abraham believed God as to the innumerable seed that should spring from him through Isaac. His implicit faith in God's word as to this showed that he believed God.

The passage in Genesis does not even say that God told Abraham that his faith was counted to him for righteousness. This was _____ written about him, and Paul uses it here as evidence for justification by faith.

It is a precious fact, however, that while God did not yet reveal to those of ancient times the significance of their sacrifices, we can NOW look back with Paul at these sacrifices – and all the types, physical and historical, and exclaim: "Truly the cross was not an accident, nor the dispensation of grace an afterthought. God had them in mind all the while.

This was indeed His secret, eternal purpose, "hid from ages and from generations," but made known in due time through Paul, the chief of sinners saved by grace!

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

Mark well, God now does not merely pronounce works for salvation unnecessary; He _____ them.



Justification is not merely not “to him that worketh;” it is “to him that worketh not, but believeth.” To be justified before God we must come to the end of ourselves, and “lay our deadly doing down,” receiving “the gift of righteousness” in simple faith, through Christ, who died for us.

2 Timothy 1:9 - Who hath saved us, and called us with an holy calling, not according to our works, but according to his own purpose and (his own) grace, which was given us in Christ Jesus before the world began.



If God had required Abraham to do something for his righteousness, such as to self-generate a faith mindset or to do certain physical works, then the righteousness given to him would be considered payment for what he had earned, hence, God paying His debt to Abraham.

Unlike verse 4, verse 5 is dealing with the person not working, but believing on God. According to this verse there is absolutely no room for justification to be _____ through both works and faith. These two principles are mutually exclusive and cannot be mixed; works incur debt and grace incurs righteousness.

The language used in verse 5 portrays God as the sole justifier of the ungodly, which means that He convicts them of sin and imparts to them faith in Himself on the basis of which He declares that they are righteous.

The Grace which God extends to believers includes both the substitutionary death of Christ, that which makes it possible for Him to be just and the justifier of the ungodly, and the faith which identifies the sinner with this death.

The Case of David:

David too is called upon to testify to Paul's basic contention as to justification by faith, apart from works. It must not be supposed; however, that David knew about "the dispensation of the grace of God" any more than Abraham did.

Paul quotes David who speaks about a group of people who have a desirable status, who are happy and blessed above others. What have they done to obtain this status?

The passive voice makes it clear that they did _____.
God is the one who is wholly responsible for their happy state.

According to David, this happiness is the result of God sovereignly doing two things.

First, those who have had their iniquities forgiven are blessed ones.

Second, those who have their sins covered are blessed ones.

We recognize that prior to the cross, God was able to forgive iniquities and cover sins in view of His foreordained redemptive purpose in Jesus Christ.

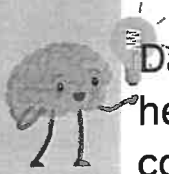
It should be noted here that whereas Paul cites Abraham to show that justification is obtained by faith, without works, he cites David to demonstrate that the sinner, once justified, cannot be condemned to eternal punishment by the Law.

David "describes" this:

"saying blessed are they whose iniquities are forgiven, and whose sins are covered. Blessed is the man to whom the Lord will not impute sin."



Abraham lived _____ the law was given, while David lived _____ the Law.



David could not have understood the “how and why” of all this, but he did know that God had forgiven him even though the Law condemned him, and he described the blessedness of this knowledge.

For God not to count a person’s sin against him, on the basis of the redemption in Christ, is an essential step in reckoning him righteous in Christ.

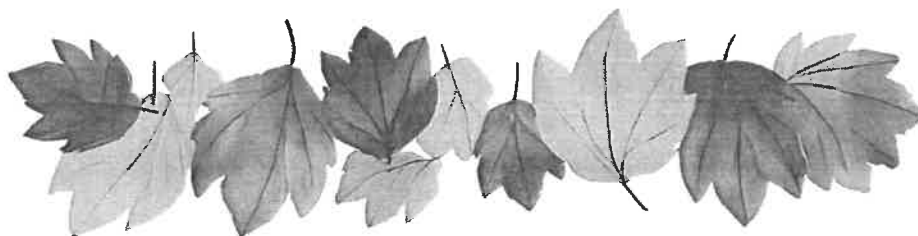
In summary, what David says negatively fully affirms what Paul says positively – where sin is not counted there is righteousness.

A Contradiction?

Before proceeding with the rest of our lesson, let’s briefly deal with a seeming contradiction between Romans 4:3-5 and James 2:24.

In Romans 4:3-5, Paul clearly declares that men are justified by faith alone, without works, but James 2:24 states with equal clarity: “Ye see then how that by works a man is justified, and not by faith only.”

It seems the answer to this supposed contradiction is a _____ one. With this in view let us note several background comparisons:



LOOK!

Romans	James
Writer is Paul	Writer is James
Addresses Gentiles	Addresses 12 Tribes
Abraham before Circumcision	Abraham after Circumcision
Quotes Gen. 15:6	Quotes Gen. 22:1-8
Paul mentions only Abraham's acceptance of the good news concerning his seed.	James deal with his faith in a severe test.
	

All of these are significant differences.

This, I believe, is the answer to the seeming contradiction between Romans 4:5 and James 2:24.

The Epistle of James will fit into God's dispensational plan just where it is found in the canon of Scripture: after the Pauline dispensation.

When "the dispensation of the grace of God" has run its course God will again begin dealing with "the twelve tribes of Israel," now "scattered abroad."

RIGHTEOUSNESS IMPUTED ENTIRELY APART FROM CIRCUMCISION

In Rom. 4:1-8 the Apostle uses Abraham and David to demonstrate the validity of his argument for justification by faith, apart from works.

Now, from Verse 9 to the end of the chapter he presses this truth home, demonstrating further that righteousness is imputed to believers entirely _____ from circumcision and entirely apart from the Law.

"Cometh this blessedness" - the double blessedness of righteousness imputed and sins not imputed - "upon the Circumcision only, or upon the Uncircumcision also"?

This was a natural question for the Jew to raise seeing that the Apostle had just said that "faith was reckoned to Abraham for righteousness," and Abraham was the father of the Hebrew race - of which, indeed, David also was a member.

Circumcision did not _____ Abraham. It was merely a "sign," a token; "a seal of the righteousness of the faith which he had yet being uncircumcised" (Ver.11). Thus he became "the father of all them that believe, though they be not circumcised" (Ver. 11).

On the same basis he became "the father of circumcision," not to those who merely submitted to the religious rite of circumcision, but "who also walk in the steps of that faith" which Abraham had, "being yet uncircumcised," i.e., he became the father of those Jews who truly believe (Ver. 12). Such have the reality of which circumcision was but the outward sign.

How clearly all this teaches us that justification, or imputed righteousness, never did rest upon the mere _____ of any physical rite, whether circumcision, or the sacrifices of the Law, or water baptism, but on faith alone.

How clearly, too, this proves that the blessedness of righteousness imputed and sins not imputed is for both Jews and Gentiles who approach God in faith, believing what He says about Christ, and coming to Him through Christ (Rom.3:21-27).

Finally, this passage teaches, by clear implication, that those who insist upon justifying themselves, "going about to establish their own righteousness," are not, even if Jews, recognized by God as the true children of Abraham, since Abraham is "the father of all them that believe" (Rom. 4:11). Indeed, we have already seen in our studies in Romans 2 that:

"...he is not a Jew which is one outwardly; neither is that circumcision, which is outward in the flesh" (Ver. 28).

Conversely, the Apostle says of all believers in Christ:

"For we are the Circumcision, which worship God in the spirit, and rejoice in Christ Jesus, and have no confidence in the flesh" (Phil. 3:3).

Hallelujah