

God's Good News About Righteousness

An Inductive Study of the Book of Romans

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Study 7, Abraham, Illustration of Righteousness Declared Because of Faith

Romans 4:1-25 (Part 1, 4:1-12)

- A. INTRODUCTION: The Writer, the Readers, and the Good News (Romans 1:1-17).
- B. CONDEMNATION: The Unveiling of God's Wrath against Man's Unrighteousness 1:18 - 3:20

- C. **JUSTIFICATION: The Declaration of Righteousness through Faith 3:21 - 5:21.**
 - 1. God's Righteous Provision of a Righteousness for Humans Apart From the Law 3:21-31. (Study 6.)

 - 2. **Abraham, the Illustration of Righteousness Declared Because of Faith. 4:1-25. (Study 7, Part 1, 4:1-12.)**
 - a. **Abraham was justified (declared righteous) apart from works. 4:1-5.**
 - 1) Abraham, boasting, and righteousness? 4:1-3.
 - a) If Abraham had been justified (declared righteous) because of works he had performed, would he have had something to boast about? (4:1-2).
 - b) What does the record in Scripture (quoting Genesis 15:6) say was the cause for Abraham's being credited with righteousness? (4:3).
 - 2) Works versus Grace. (4:4-5).
 - a) If someone works, how can his wages be classified? (4:4).
 - b) If someone does not work, but rather believes in God, what is the result of his faith? (4:5).
 - c) What is God's policy toward ungodly people who believe in Him? (4:5).

b. Righteousness apart from works is documented in Old Testament Scripture through what David said. (4:6-8).

- 1) What blessing does David, Israel's greatest King, speak about? (4:6).
- 2) In Romans 4:7-8, Paul quotes from Psalm 32:1-2, which was written by David.
 - a) Who is truly blessed – (4:7).
 - i – The one whose lawless deeds have been what?
 - ii – The one whose sins have been what?
 - b) Who is truly blessed? (4:8).

c. Abraham was justified (declared righteous) by God before he was circumcised. (4:9-12).¹

- 1) In Romans 4:9b, Paul quotes Genesis 15:6. What important truth about faith and righteousness does Paul repeat?
- 2) What is Paul's question in Romans 4:9a? (Hint: He is raising a question about the *availability* of justification.)
- 3) Paul next raises a question about the *timing* of Abraham's justification (being credited with righteousness) (4:10).
 - a) What is his question? (4:10a).
 - b) How does he answer it? (4:10b).
- 4) What was the *significance* of Abraham's circumcision? (4:11a). (Of what did it serve as a seal?)
- 5) What is the result to non-Jewish people because of Abraham's having been credited with righteousness because of his faith *before* he was circumcised? (4:11b).

¹ Historical note: God's appearance in a vision to Abraham, in which he believed God, resulting in his being declared righteous, is recorded in Genesis 15:1-6. The account of his circumcision is recorded in Gen. 17, a minimum of 13 years later (cf. Gen. 16:16 and 17:1).

- 6) What do those who are Abraham's Jewish physical descendants need *in addition* to their circumcision? (4:12).

d. Concluding Questions.

- 1) What does God require of people in any age in order that He might justify them (declare them righteous)?
- 2) Does anyone have anything to brag about in regard to his justification?
- 3) God, in the Old Testament, asked Abraham to be circumcised as a sign of his prior faith. God does not require us New Testament Gentiles to be circumcised to show our faith. What does He require of us as a sign of our faith in Jesus? (See Matthew 28:18-19; Acts 8:5, 12.)
- 4) In the Old Testament, did God credit circumcision as righteousness if people didn't believe in Him?
- 5) Under the New Testament, does God credit baptism as righteousness if we don't trust in Jesus?
- 6) How are we saved from the penalty we deserve because of our sin? (Ephesians 2:8-9).
- 7) What role do our works play in saving us? (Eph. 2:8-9).
- 8) What is the importance of works after we have trusted in Jesus? (Eph. 2:10).

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Romans 4:1-12

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