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**Romans 4** This study has not been posted on facebook yet



By Dan Maines

## **Romans 4**

### **Romans 4:1-2**

What then shall we say that Abraham, our forefather according to the flesh, has found? For if Abraham was justified by works, he has something to boast about; but not before God.

† Paul introduces Abraham as the model of justification. If justification came by works, Abraham could boast. But Scripture never presents him as boasting before God. His standing was based on faith.

† Genesis 15:6 states that Abraham believed God, and it was credited to him as righteousness. This was before the law, showing faith precedes works.

† Josephus (Antiquities 1.7.1) praised Abraham for his faith in one God rather than idols. Paul confirms that Abraham's righteousness was grounded in belief, not in works.

### **Romans 4:3**

For what does the Scripture say? "Abraham believed God, and it was credited to him as righteousness."

† This quotation from Genesis 15:6 is central. Righteousness was credited, not earned. The covenant promise rested on faith.

† Philo also highlighted Abraham's faith as the foundation of his righteousness, showing this interpretation was consistent with Jewish thought, but Paul sharpens it toward covenant fulfillment in Christ.

### **Romans 4:4-5**

Now to the one who works, the wages are not credited as a favor, but as what is due. But to the one who does not work, but believes in Him who justifies the ungodly, his faith is credited as righteousness.

† Paul draws a contrast. Works earn wages, but faith receives righteousness as a gift. God justifies the ungodly, not the deserving.

† This demolishes Jewish pride in the law. Covenant membership is not a wage for obedience but a gift of faith.

### **Romans 4:6-8**

just as David also speaks of the blessing of the person to whom God credits righteousness apart from works: "Blessed are those whose lawless deeds have been forgiven, and whose sins have

been covered. Blessed is the man whose sin the Lord will not take into account."

† Paul quotes Psalm 32:1-2. David, under the law, knew that forgiveness was by grace. Righteousness was credited apart from works.

† This shows continuity. Abraham before the law and David under the law both testify that righteousness comes by faith, not works.

### **Romans 4:9-10**

Is this blessing then on the circumcised, or on the uncircumcised also? For we say, "Faith was credited to Abraham as righteousness." How then was it credited? While he was circumcised, or uncircumcised? Not while circumcised, but while uncircumcised.

† Abraham was declared righteous before circumcision. This proves that covenant membership is not tied to the physical sign but to faith.

† Against the Jewish boast in circumcision, Paul shows that Abraham is father of both circumcised and uncircumcised who believe.

### **Romans 4:11-12**

And he received the sign of circumcision, a seal of the righteousness of the faith which he had while uncircumcised, so that he might be the father of all who believe without being circumcised, that righteousness might be credited to them, and the father of circumcision to those who not only are of the circumcision, but who also follow in the steps of the faith of our father Abraham which he had while uncircumcised.

† Circumcision was a sign, not the basis, of righteousness. Abraham is father of all who believe, Jew and Gentile alike.

† This directly fulfills Genesis 17:5, "I have made you the father of a multitude of nations."

### **Romans 4:13-14**

For the promise to Abraham or to his descendants that he would be heir of the world was not through the Law, but through the righteousness of faith. For if those who are of the Law are heirs, then faith is made void and the promise is nullified.

† The promise to Abraham was that he would inherit the world, not through law, but through faith. This points to covenant expansion beyond Israel.

† If inheritance came by law, faith would be empty. The law could not deliver the promise.

### **Romans 4:15**

for the Law brings about wrath, but where there is no law, there also is no violation.

† The law exposes sin and brings wrath. The law never provided righteousness, only the knowledge of transgression.

### **Romans 4:16-17**

For this reason it is by faith, in order that it may be in accordance with grace, so that the promise will be guaranteed to all the descendants, not only to those who are of the Law, but also to those who are of the faith of Abraham, who is the father of us all, (as it is written: "I have made you a father of many nations") in the presence of Him whom he believed, that is, God, who gives life to the dead and calls into being things that do not exist.

† Faith ensures that the promise rests on grace, making it certain for all Abraham's descendants by faith. Both Jew and

Gentile are included.

† The God who raises the dead and calls into being that which does not exist fulfilled His promise in Christ.

### **Romans 4:18-19**

In hope against hope he believed, so that he might become a father of many nations according to that which had been spoken, "So shall your descendants be." Without becoming weak in faith, he contemplated his own body, now as good as dead since he was about a hundred years old, and the deadness of Sarah's womb.

† Abraham believed against all human hope. His body was as good as dead, but God brought life. This becomes a picture of covenant resurrection, life out of death.

### **Romans 4:20-21**

yet, with respect to the promise of God, he did not waver in unbelief but grew strong in faith, giving glory to God, and being fully assured that what God had promised, He was able also to perform.

† Abraham's faith honored God's power. Faith is not blind optimism but confidence in God's covenant faithfulness.

### **Romans 4:22-23**

Therefore it was also credited to him as righteousness. Now not for his sake only was it written that it was credited to him,

† This was not for Abraham alone but for all who believe. His faith was a pattern of covenant justification.

### **Romans 4:24-25**

but for our sake also, to whom it will be credited, to us who believe in Him who raised Jesus our Lord from the dead, He who was delivered over because of our wrongdoings, and was

raised because of our justification.

† Abraham's faith is fulfilled in those who believe in Christ's death and resurrection. Righteousness is credited through faith in Him.

† Jesus' death was for our sins, His resurrection for our justification. This is the heart of the gospel.

### **How it applies to us today**

† Our covenant identity is rooted in faith, not works or outward signs. Just as Abraham was justified by faith, so are we.

† God's promises are certain because they rest on His grace. Faith honors His faithfulness.

† We must not boast in heritage, ritual, or law. True righteousness is credited by faith in Christ.

† Abraham's hope against hope encourages us to trust God even when circumstances look impossible. His covenant promises never fail.

**† This is the fulfilled perspective we proclaim at Fulfilled Prophecies †**

### **Source Index**

† Josephus, Antiquities 1.7.1 – Abraham's faith in one God

† Philo, On Abraham – Faith as the foundation of righteousness

† Psalm 32:1-2 – Blessedness of forgiveness apart from works

† Genesis 17:5 – Abraham father of many nations

† Isaiah 46:13 – God brings near His righteousness

† Origen, Commentary on Romans – Faith as covenant marker

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