

***“Romans, Dispensationally Considered —  
The Capstone of Our Faith, Christ Jesus Raised for Our Justification”***

***Review: “Romans, Dispensationally Considered — By Faith Alone the  
Blessedness of God Is Ours! Part 2”***

- ***Today, Gentiles By Faith, Not Law, Are Blessed by A Holy, Righteous God***
- ***Today, Gentiles, By Grace Through Faith Alone, Are Also Abraham’s Seed***
  
- ***Today, Gentiles By Faith, Not Law, Are Blessed by A Holy, Righteous God***

***Romans 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.***

- ***So what is scripture saying? Simply that Abraham had become the father of all them that believe, though they be not circumcised; that righteousness might be imputed unto them also: 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. This last statement is remarkable because it uses the privileged and sacred word (for Jews) “circumcised” in direct reference to Gentiles!***

***My, my, how bold Paul is again here, to write this of blessed Abraham, who has by his faith and that alone, become “... 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.”***

- ***So it is clear from the test of scripture itself that we Gentiles on the basis of our faith alone through the word of grace given to us also have such standing as Abraham did. This is true and godly blessing indeed. Do we grasp the full meaning of it?***

***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.***

- ***Abraham was promised that he and his offspring would be “heirs of the world” and that by the righteousness of faith, not works. And he now continues with yet another “proof” to establish the point forever, two verses that are intended again to emphasize the great***

*gulf between works and faith. In this he emphasizes how Abraham's faith related to the giving of that promise and in no way, he assures us, can this be connected to his works.*

**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:

**15** Because the law worketh wrath: for where no law is, there is no transgression.

- *This is yet another absolute statement indeed like so many others found here in the Romans. For, he writes here, there is something that can easily disable the power of faith and cancel the benefits of the unconditional promise the Lord God has made. And that one thing is the works of law. Mixing law and grace is not therefore allowed. For here and elsewhere in Paul's letters he uses this expression "of the law" to mean "of the works of the law". The Galatians letter is clear on that. So those whose presumed standing before Almighty God is based on their works have in effect rejected that promise and that redemptive work of the Lord God. And yet so many choose to dwell there as if that earthly and carnal standard is the high calling indeed for us all.*
  - *There is no other place to stand, for he writes next with such certainty and power: "... and the promise made of none effect." These are words with such great dispensational content that all should take note well. For he is indeed writing of his current day and the dispensation of the grace of God, isn't he? Yes, grace may be short-circuited, as you will recall I have often said.*
  - *But that is not all, for he then gives the reason for his boldness in case we are not yet convinced: "Because the law worketh wrath: for where no law is, there is no transgression." My, my, there is no "threading of the needle" here, no mincing of words. For how can any few words be this simple and yet so powerful? What is he saying here? Clearly that the law brings with it transgressions inevitably! So it cannot be the foundation in itself of any relationship with a holy and righteous God.*

*Summarizing, again, those words are: "the law worketh wrath: for where no law is, there is no transgression ...".*

- *The implications of this for our day and every day, are far and wide. Not that there are no moral standards today under grace, for that is not his point here. But it is this, that we are taught by his grace how to live as Titus makes so very clear in chapter 2 and verses 11 & 12 and not by the tenets of the Law of Moses.*
- *Indeed, we are not under the law but under grace. Never forget that.*
- *Where therefore do we stand today, brethren? Where there is no transgression!! Never forget that, for the apostle of the Gentiles has written it here so clearly that no one can possibly deny it.*
- *“Because the law worketh wrath: for where no law is, there is no transgression.”: So there can be no spiritual benefit in legal works, no, none at all. Why? Because the law “works wrath, not blessing”. But as the children of Abraham by faith, we are blessed according to that promise to him applied to us, not literally, but spiritually, on the basis of our faith alone, apart from any and all works.*
- *Today, Gentiles, By Grace Through Faith Alone, Are Also Abraham’s Seed*

**[READ ] 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 ...

- *And now, concluding this wonderful teaching here in the fourth of Romans, we read this: “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 ...”. Praise God. What is the “it” here referring to? It is all about the promise just mentioned, the promise that had been given to Abraham. Heb. 6:13 ff also references it with even more to say. Study it carefully to get benefit, for there as verse 19 states so affirmatively, our Lord Jesus alone has entered “into that within the veil”, and has been made a high priest forever and is therefore uniquely “an anchor of the soul, both sure and steadfast ...” and why? And it is therefore in him we have righteousness and life eternal. Amen.*

- *So where is our refuge today? Is it in religious works of law or in the promises of Almighty God? Do we therefore live as religious devotees or do we live as those that are alive from the dead, possessing the very righteousness of Christ and enjoying his resurrection life?*

**Our Outline Today: “The Capstone of Our Faith, Christ Jesus Raised for Our Justification”**

- *Abraham, Our Father of Faith, Believed God’s Promise Against Hope*
- *Abraham Staggered Not at the Promise of God Through Unbelief*
- *Abraham Was Declared Righteous by Believing God’s Gracious News*

**I. Abraham, Our Father of Faith, Believed God’s Promise Against Hope:**

***[READ ] Romans 4:17-18***

**17** (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.

**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.

- *So Paul again takes us back to those defining scriptures in Genesis 15 that make such a difference for our understanding and our faith therefore, because the focus is on what God has said, the few words he has given and which the Lord held so high:*
  - *He believed God (not in God, a vast difference)*
  - *He believed a God who has spoken, the one who now had revealed himself in the gospel itself as that one “who quickens the dead ...”*
  - *And, a God that “calleth those things which be not as though they were”!*
- *Now about Abraham where this becomes so very personal:*
  - *He “against hope believed in hope ...”:*
  - *“... that he might become the father of many nations ...”*
  - *Just as the word (and words) had indicated: “So shall thy seed be”.*
- *Conclusion: He believed what humanly was impossible (or was against all human hope, all hope-so). This was true faith, not*

*anything else but authentic.*

*But before continuing, let's pause for a moment as I make another important distinction. The fundamental issue here is not about "the degree of our faith" as is so commonly thought. It is a matter of what the faith was based on and related to, and that was the word of the promise and only that. What make the difference is WHAT we believe, NOT HOW MUCH we believe. Faith always has content. It is a matter of WHAT we have believed, NOT HOW MUCH. Really.*

- *But what might the deniers say to this were we to testify of it freely? They love to talk about "matters of degree", and never about "the matter of content", or truth and its meaning. The problem they say using a common and highly overused expression, "easy believism", so called, or a "mere" intellectual or mental assent, is that true and authentic faith is more than that belief, adding something more and emphasizing "how " or matters of degree. Using additional modifiers like "Lord" or "complete" or others is so common. The so-called "Lordship salvation" movement is a leader in this. But this doctrine and its siblings is exceedingly dangerous and contrary to Pauline teaching.*
- *The message God gave and Abraham believed was simple and perhaps not what one would have expected: "So shall thy seed be"! But so be it. Amen and amen. He believed that good news and it was counted to him for righteousness. We also must believe the good news given to us as Paul will write here shortly. What a blessing, this unlimited grace provided to us. Amen.*
- *Paul now further explains himself even further so as to remove any possibility of misunderstanding:*

## **II. Abraham Staggered Not at the Promise of God Through Unbelief:**

**[READ ] Romans 4:19-21**

**19 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:**

**20 He staggered not at the promise of God through unbelief; but was strong in faith, giving glory to God;**

**21 And being fully persuaded that, what he had promised, he was able also to perform.**

- *The keys words here are “faith”, “promise”, and “persuaded”. The latter word is a new one for us here in our studies in the Romans...*
- *“he considered not his own body now dead...” “neither yet the deadness of Sara's womb” at age 100: Do we grasp the full magnitude of this? Do we? What does it say here? There had been a fundamental change in his heart and mind, clearly. Previously he had considered his body and Sara’s “dead indeed” and therefore unable to produce any offspring, ever.*
- *“He staggered not at the promise of God through unbelief; but was strong in faith, giving glory to God ...”: His faith was not weak but strong! He accepted the promise of God believing, taking the Lord God fully at his word.*
- *“And being fully persuaded that, what he had promised, he was able also to perform...”: Persuaded carries with it the concept here of fulfilling completely due to the Greek prefix attached. Then also it is in the aorist passive tense signifying the past work of an external agent. Of course that was Almighty God. And then we have those words “he was able”. Doing a word study on this phrase will enlighten our minds most wonderfully.*

### **III. Abraham Was Declared Righteous by Believing God’s Gracious News:**

**[READ ] Romans 4:22-25**

**22 And therefore it was imputed to him for righteousness.**

**23 Now it was not written for his sake alone, that it was imputed to him;**

**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;**

**25 Who was delivered for our offences, and was raised again for our justification.**

- *And then the conclusion of this section follows with so much already established. He uses the logical connective “therefore”. Here we see so clearly the glory of it all. Paul’s words here are most wonderful.*
  - *“And therefore it was imputed to him for righteousness”: The argument is complete; it is settled. There is no room for the gainsayers. Works had nothing to do with Abraham’s justification, his righteousness was declared as complete by Almighty God having been established by him and him alone!*

- ***“... Now it was not written for his sake alone, that it was imputed to him; But for us also, to whom it shall be imputed, if we believe on him that raised up Jesus our Lord from the dead ...”: This is all about the purpose of God behind Gen. 15:6 and how this truth regarding justification extended in the mind of God far beyond Abraham and his offspring.***

***It was for him definitely. But it was also for us, amazingly, not even born until millennia later, but already in the mind of God! There would be no way for us to know this apart from the directly revelation of God, of course. This is so wonderful. How many know it? How many have yo told about it?***

- ***Some conclusions must be drawn:***
  - ***Abraham is the father of faith to all who believe, Jew or Gentile. Personal righteousness is of no value unless one walks “in the faith of Abraham” who took God at his word believing apart from the revealed works were even possible.***
  - ***The key to the reception of God’s righteousness is our personal faith. But what is that faith all about? It is taking God at his word as it has been given. Without that one cannot be “justified” or “declared righteous” and one is “still in their sins” awaiting the judgment.***
- ***Now we see clearly how utterly and critically important the gospel is, for in its original wording it has saving power. That the translations are accurate is so important therefore that we might have the word of God in our own language. Praise God.***
- ***We have reached the end of this foundational section in this letter. The transition from promise and law has been accomplished. The next five chapters give blessed teaching on what it means to be a believer. Praise Almighty God, the God of all grace, for this blessed teaching. Amen and amen.***

**Conclusions and application:**

- ***Thanks and praise to Almighty God, our God, for giving us this revelation of his will, removing our blindresses to it, and welcoming us into the family of God having justified us on the basis of our faith alone! And now, may we go forth bearing fruit with the word of life in Christ Jesus in our mouths always.***