

Romans – Chapter 4

Summary of Previous Chapter

- *The Jews were blessed by receiving the law which helped them understand God's righteousness*
- *The law of Moses also shows us sin*
- *All are sinful*
- *All are justified by God's grace*
- *God is right and He makes us right through the cross of Jesus*
- *We have no reason to boast*

Chapter 4: Abraham: Father of the Faithful

Word to highlight: **Faith**

Why Abraham was Counted Righteous (1-8)

¹ What then shall we say was gained by Abraham, our forefather according to the flesh? ² For if Abraham was justified by works, he has something to boast about, but not before God.

³ For what does the Scripture say? *"Abraham believed God, and it was counted to him as righteousness."* ⁴ Now to the one who works, his wages are not counted as a gift but as his due.

⁵ And to the one who does not work but believes in him who justifies the ungodly, his faith is counted as righteousness, ⁶ just as David also speaks of the blessing of the one to whom God counts righteousness apart from works:

⁷ "Blessed are those whose lawless deeds are forgiven,
and whose sins are covered;

⁸ blessed is the man against whom the Lord will not count his sin."

What is the difference between a gift and wages?

Did Abraham's righteousness come as a gift or as a wage?

Of all the possible Old Testament characters, why does Paul choose Abraham to make his point?

Abraham and Circumcision (9-12)

⁹ Is this blessing then only for the circumcised, or also for the uncircumcised? For we say that faith was counted to Abraham as righteousness. ¹⁰ How then was it counted to him? Was it before or after he had been circumcised? It was not after, but before he was circumcised.

¹¹ He received the sign of circumcision as a seal of the righteousness that he had by faith while he was still uncircumcised. The purpose was to make him the father of all who believe without being circumcised, so that righteousness would be counted to them as well, ¹² and to make him the father of the circumcised who are not merely circumcised but who also walk in the footsteps of the faith that our father Abraham had before he was circumcised.

Did circumcision make Abraham righteous? Why?

What then was the purpose of circumcision?

The Promise or the Law (13-15)

¹³ For the promise to Abraham and his offspring that he would be heir of the world did not come through the law but through the righteousness of faith.

¹⁴ For if it is the adherents of the law who are to be the heirs, faith is null and the promise is void. ¹⁵ For the law brings wrath, but where there is no law there is no transgression.

Read Genesis 17:1-7

Was this promise made before or after the Law of Moses?

Why is that important?

God keeps His Promises (16-25)

¹⁶ That is why it depends on faith, in order that the promise may rest on grace and be guaranteed to all his offspring—not only to the adherent of the law but also to the one who shares the faith of Abraham, who is the father of us all, ¹⁷ as it is written, “*I have made you the father of many nations*”—in the presence of the God in whom he believed, who gives life to the dead and calls into existence the things that do not exist.

¹⁸ In hope he believed against hope, that he should become the father of many nations, as he had been told, “*So shall your offspring be.*” ¹⁹ He did not weaken in faith when he considered his own body, which was as good as dead (since he was about a hundred years old), or when he considered the barrenness of Sarah's womb. ²⁰ No unbelief made him waver concerning the promise of God, but he grew strong in his faith as he gave glory to God, ²¹ fully convinced that God was able to do what he had promised.

²² That is why his faith was “*counted to him as righteousness.*” ²³ But the words “*it was counted to him*” were not written for his sake alone, ²⁴ but for ours also. It will be counted to us who believe in him who raised from the dead Jesus our Lord, ²⁵ who was delivered up for our trespasses and raised for our justification.

**Does the promise to Abraham rest of keeping the law or on God’s grace?
(see vs 16)**

Who are the offspring of Abraham according to verse 16?

How did Abraham demonstrate his faith? (see vs18-20)

How will righteousness be counted to us? (see vs 22-25)

Questions

How would we summarise this chapter?

What can I apply from what I have learnt? How does this chapter change my choices and behaviour?

What is something I can pray for based on this text?