

Comments About Romans 4

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BIG SANDY, Texas—Recently, I began a series of brief articles to discuss chapters in the book of Romans. This week, we will talk about chapter 4.

May this project encourage you to review the valuable history found in the book of Romans.

Abraham and faith

In chapter 3, we noted how the apostle Paul mentioned the righteousness of God apart from the law (Romans 3:21) and through faith (verse 22).

Paul mentioned redemption through Christ Jesus (verses 24-26), a person's boasting should not be in the law (verses 27-30), and the law still has value (verse 31).

In chapter 4, Paul continued the discussion by discussing Abraham and circumcision.

- If Abraham was justified by deeds, he had something of which to boast—but not before God (Romans 4:1-2).
- Paul paraphrased Genesis 15:6 (verse 3).

Romans 4:3—"For what does the Scripture say? 'Abraham believed God, and it was accounted to him for righteousness.' "

- Paul mentioned that depending upon deeds focuses on debt instead of grace (verse 4).

Mentioning David

Although the vast majority of chapter 4 discusses Abraham, Paul did make a brief mention about David (verses 5-8).

- Paul paraphrased Psalm 32:1-2 (verses 7-8).

Romans 4:7-8—"Blessed are those whose lawless deeds are forgiven, and whose sins are covered; blessed is the man to whom the LORD shall not impute sin."

Before circumcision

Paul makes a strong case about faith by mentioning that Abraham was justified before circumcision (verses 9-12).

- Does God accept only those who are circumcised (verse 9)?

■ Was Abraham accepted only after he was circumcised (verse 10)? No, he was accepted while he was uncircumcised (verses 10-12).

Promise through faith

Paul continued to use the example of Abraham to show that the promise came through faith.

- The promise to Abraham was not through the law (verse 13).
- The law cannot make faith void and cannot make the promise of no effect (verse 14).
- The law actually brings wrath—in that it reveals sin (verse 15).
- The promise came through the faith of Abraham (verse 16).
- Paul paraphrased Genesis 17:5 (verse 17) and Genesis 15:5 (verse 18).
- Paul mentioned how the promise did not depend upon the limitations of his age and Sarah's age (verse 19).

Romans 4:19—"And not being weak in faith, he did not consider his own body, already dead (since he was about a hundred years old), and the deadness of Sarah's womb."

- Abraham believed the promise (verses 20-21).

Romans 4:20-21—"He did not waver at the promise of God through unbelief, but was strengthened in faith, giving glory to God, and being fully convinced that what He had promised He was also able to perform."

- Paul again paraphrased Genesis 15:6 (verse 22).
- Paul mentioned how the promise to Abraham was connected to the resurrection of the Son of God (verses 23-25).

Romans 4:23-25—"Now it was not written for his sake alone that it was imputed to him, but also for us. It shall be imputed to us who believe in Him who raised up Jesus our Lord from the dead, who was delivered up because of our offenses, and was raised because of our justification."