

# Romans 4:1-3

## Abraham's Righteousness

### 1. 4:1 - Abraham's Flesh

- a. *"what shall we say then"* ... as a result of Romans 3:27-31
  - i. Boasting in the flesh and the law are excluded; yet the law is established.
- b. *"Abraham"* - Abraham / David represent Israel's covenant heritage - Matt 1:1
  - i. Abraham = Father of the nation, circumcision; David = King and country, Messiah
- c. *"our father"* - The father of Israel, father of many nations, father of us all (not in flesh)
- d. *"as pertaining to the flesh"* - The subject continues from ch. 3, can we boast in flesh.
  - i. Rom 4 is Paul responding pertaining to the men who held promises in the flesh
  - ii. Rom 4 is Paul responding pertaining to the men who did great things in the flesh
- e. *"hath found"* - Abraham found this out in Genesis - not in this dispensation.
  - i. Paul is teaching from the Torah (Law/Genesis), this is not mystery information.
  - ii. Paul's gospel (Rom 1:16) evidenced by scriptures teaching just by faith (1:17).
  - iii. This not plan B (law failed, so now grace), but God's manifold wisdom - Eph 3:10
  - iv. This is law and prophets witnessing what Paul is teaching now - 3:21, 24, 26, 4:24
  - v. *What did he learn?* Before God, no flesh can glory - 1 Cor 1:29, Jer 9:23-24, 4:2

### 2. 4:2 - Abraham's Justification

- a. A failure to rightly divide makes this chapter a battle ground starting with v2
- b. *"if Abraham were justified by works"* - which is what Israel knew - Heb 11:8-10
- c. *"justified by works"* - James says this very thing in James 2:14-17, 21-24
  - i. Paul is making the case that Abraham was not - a clear difference; why?
- d. The passages are different (*do not change the verses! Most do.*)
  - i. Both are true in their context; The context of faith and work were different.
  - ii. Things changed in Abraham's own life Gen 12:3, 15:6, 17:9-14, see Gal 4:21-23
  - iii. Abe's works were his willing sacrifice of his son: Gen 22:1-19, Heb 11:17-19
  - iv. Abraham justified twice because God gave him two opportunities to justify!
    1. A promised fruitful seed, faith counts for righteousness - Gen 15:6
    2. Circumcised, offer your son, 'because thou hast done' - Gen 22:16
  - v. For James, Gen 15 was fulfilled in Israel's covenants, requiring Gen 17, 22
  - vi. Paul reveals that Gen 15 was fulfilled by Christ for the heathen - Gal 3:6-9
- e. *"whereof to glory"* - but Rom 3:23 has before proven all come short of God's glory
  - i. James: faith = of Christ as Lord      work = Men obeying Lord's commands
  - ii. Paul: faith = of Christ (his work)      work = Christ's finished cross work (grace)

### 3. 4:3-5 - Abraham's Righteousness

- a. v2 - Abraham's works do not glory before God
- b. v3 - Abraham's belief of God was counted for righteousness
- c. v4 - If he works for righteousness it is not grace
- d. v5 - If he believes on God, without works, his faith is counted for righteousness
- e. *"what saith the scripture?"* - Abe was justified by faith only in Gen 15:6 before 22:16