

Romans 4:9-12

Blessing Without Circumcision

1. 4:1-8 - Review

- a. Both Abraham and David are examples of imputed righteousness by faith w/o works
 - i. Both leading figures in Israel's covenant identity.
 - ii. Both given sure promises - guaranteed mercy - both responded in faith.
 - iii. Both received the blessing of imputed righteousness.
- b. It was not the works of Abraham or David that justified, but faith without works.
 - i. Both would need Christ's cross that Paul preaches – 2 Tim 2:8

2. 4:9-10 - Blessed in Uncircumcision

- a. *'blessedness... upon circumcision only?'* - Paul challenging Israel's flesh / covenants
 - i. Circumcision identified covenant people - Eph 2:11-12
 - ii. Circumcision separated in the flesh - and with a wall - Eph 2:14, Acts 10:28
 - iii. Now in Christ: "Neither circumcision nor uncircumcision" - Gal 3:28, Col 3:11
- b. *"for we say..."* - stated in 4:1-3 - righteousness by faith (*not circumcision*)
 - i. Which was raised before in relation to works - Gen 15 (Paul) vs. Gen 22 (James)
 - ii. Now it is raised according to Abraham's covenant status/identity.
- c. *"How was it then reckoned"* (imputed) - Paul makes timing important
 - i. Gen 23:1 - Abraham 136 yrs, Sarah dies at 127 yrs, Isaac 36 yrs
 - ii. Gen 22 - Isaac was not a young child - Gen 22:6
 - iii. Gen 21:5 - Abraham 100 yrs, Sarah 90 yrs, Isaac born
 - iv. Gen 17:24 - Abraham circumcised at 99 yrs old - Sarah 90 yrs.
 - v. Gen 16:16 - Abraham 86 yrs old (Ishmael born) - uncircumcised
 - vi. Gen 15:6 - 'his faith counted to him for righteousness' - uncircumcised
 - vii. Gen 12:4 - Abraham 75 yrs old, given the first promise. - uncircumcised
 - viii. Righteousness imputed to him in uncircumcision for 13-24 yrs.

3. 4:11 - Circumcision Covenant

- a. God gave covenants to Abraham - what and how are different.
 - i. Gen 12:1-7 - land, seed, blessing - mighty nation
 - ii. Gen 13:14 - land to his multiplied seed (as the dust) for ever
 - iii. Gen 15:4-21 - seed numbered as stars, timing (400+ yrs), land confirmed
- b. Circumcision speaks to Israel's flesh and covenant (25x in Genesis, 12x in Gen 17)
 - i. Gen 17:4-6 - a father of many nations, kings
 - ii. Gen 17:7 - an everlasting covenant with thee and thy seed
 - iii. Gen 17:8 - the land given to thee and thy seed, everlasting possession
- c. Circumcision is a token of the covenant between God and Abraham's seed
 - i. Gen 17:9-11 - 'Therefore' - circumcise every man child as a token
 - ii. Gen 17:12-13 - 8 days old (Vit K on the 8th day), servants not of thy seed
 - iii. Gen 17:14 - uncircumcised = cut off, broke my covenant.
 - iv. Gen 17:15-16 - Sarah will be a mother of many nations

4. Rom 4:11 - Sign of Circumcision Avails Nothing

- a. Circumcision speaks to a covenant with Isaac (not Ishmael) - Gen 17:19-21
 - i. The covenant was the land, seed, blessing, nation forever.
 - ii. Righteousness by faith was not the covenant, but how Abraham was justified.
- b. *"received the sign of circumcision"* - due to the blessing already reckoned by faith
 - i. A sign makes a show, a seal confirms - neither one could make righteous
 - ii. Jews seek after a sign, this sign was in their flesh - 1 Cor 1:22
 - iii. A sign of what? Given to Abraham who was blessed by God thru faith already
 - iv. Circumcision did not make Abraham believe, did not impute righteousness.
- c. Likewise, circumcision does not profit those in Christ today - Galatian 5:3, 5:6, 6:15
 - i. This is the gospel of uncircumcision committed to Paul - Gal 2:7-9
 - ii. The profit spoken of is imputed righteousness not land, seed, blessing, nation.
- d. Paul's arguments remain the same if baptism is the replacement for circumcision.
 - i. Water baptism does not profit - but a new creature. Col 2:11-12, 1 Cor 1:17

5. 4:11-12 - Father of All That Believe

- a. *"father of all"* - Father Abraham had many sons... are you one of them?
 - i. These passages used wrongly to prove we are Israel/Jews
 - ii. 'Father' is 'chief, first, one who institutes a pattern' 1 Cor 4:15, 1 Tim 1:16
 - iii. He was the flesh father of more than just Israel (Ishmael, Edom, etc.)
 - iv. He is the father of "imputed righteousness by faith" - Gen 15:6, Rom 4:11b
- b. *"all them that believe"* - All of Abraham's 'sons' not after the flesh w/o circumcision
- c. *"though they be uncircumcised"* - due to father Abe being uncircumcised
- d. *"and the father"* - a different fatherhood regarding the recipients of that covenant
- e. *"father of circumcision"* - The seed of Isaac and Jacob and the everlasting covenants
 - i. *"not of the circumcision only"* - circumcision was not enough
 - ii. *"who also walk in the steps of that faith"* - Faith was necessary to receive them
- f. *"being yet uncircumcised"* - What was more important? Circumcision or faith?