

THE BOOK OF ROMANS
"The Growth of Faith"
Romans 4:22-25

June 1, 1985

INTRODUCTION

1. Abraham is the central figure of this chapter. In a remarkable way, he left Ur of the Chaldees and walked by faith to the promised land.
2. The course of the growth of Abraham's faith is so clear. The seven parts studied include: a. He was not weak in faith. b. He paid no attention to interior doubts. c. He paid no attention to outward circumstances. d. He wavered not at the promises through unbelief. e. He was strong in faith. f. He praised God for the answer before its arrival. g. He possessed the attitude of a persuaded man.

3. In view of this tremendous example of true biblical faith, there are specific declarations. Study them:-

1. IMPUTATION OF RIGHTEOUSNESS v. 22

a. A conclusion

The word "therefore" gives notice of a summary. The verse looks back to a previous one (v. 3). The immediate connection is with the quality of Abraham's faith (vv. 18-21).

b. A person

Abraham is the case in point. He is given a declaration of righteousness in view of his faith. That which men apart from God did not do, Abraham does. He gave God glory (cf. 1:21). Abraham did not have some vague sort of "faithiosity," but his faith was joined to God. It is the utter reversal of the whole process of unbelief. He was, therefore, declared righteous before God (cf. vv. 3, 9, 22). This was without a ceremony (circumcision) and before the law (which came 400 years later). Simply: it was God's work and a work of faith alone. Hallelujah.

2. INTENTION OF SCRIPTURE vv. 23, 24

a. Negativity v. 23

The phrase "it was written" seeks to emphasize the design of God's Spirit in causing the Scriptures to be written. The usual phrase pointing to the permanent validity of the Scriptures is not used. This is a great testimony to the Spirit's inspiration of the Word. Abraham was not the only focus of the Spirit. Scripture was not limited to him.

extended intent of Abraham's experience. Others would also be benefited--that is the meaning of "shall be" (actually it means "about to be"). What sort of people are intended to be considered for declared righteousness? Scripture makes it clear. They are described as "those who believe." This is their character and quality. Two items are detailed: 1) Belief on God as the raiser of the dead (cf. v. 17) This obviously is related to Abraham's experience with Isaac (cf. Heb. 11:19). 2) Belief in the actual resurrection of Christ from among the dead. The importance of Christ's bodily resurrection is clearly stated (cf. Acts; Rom. 10:9, 10).

3. INSTRUCTION OF TRUTH v. 25

a. Substitution

To be "delivered" means that Christ surrendered Himself "on account of" our trespasses. He was literally "handed over" for our sins. The passive voice points to the Lord's submission to the Father's will. This is one of the grandest themes of all Scripture.

b. Justification

The resurrection of our Lord is the "other side" of the cross. His death atoned for sin and secured our pardon and peace. But without the resurrection, Christ's grave would be the grave of all our hopes (1 Cor. 15:17). So, our Lord was resurrected "on account of" our justification. It was an absolute necessity to prove a completed work. But there is more: this is a brief introduction to the coming chapters (5-8). His death was connected with sin, His life with righteousness.

CONCLUSION

Abraham's faith speaks today. Have you heard it? Are you also declared righteous? Does your future rest on Christ's work for you? If not, why not?