

Romans: Verse-by-Verse

Romans 4:1-8 (B)

Student Notes

Moving from Abraham to David; from Genesis 15:6 to Psalm 32:1-2.

A “fundamental agreement” between Abraham and David’s expressions of righteousness:

- **The Use of The Language of “Crediting”:**

Paul’s change of the language of “crediting”: Abraham spoke of righteousness, but David will speak of sins and righteousness. David moves from faith as righteousness to righteousness itself.

Three times in David’s words he refers to evil works: Once: Transgressions or lawlessness. Twice: Sins or failures. (In both cases sin is a stepping over a boundary or a falling short of an expected behavior.)

Three times David tells us what God has done with our sins or transgressions: 1. He has forgiven our transgressions. 2. He has covered our sins. 3. He never counts our sin against us.

- **Paul’s Switch in Imagery:**

So far: 1. The righteousness of God is revealed in the gospel. 2. God’s justification of the unjust. Now: Justification as a process of double-counting, crediting, or reckoning.

David’s “double-crediting: Negatively, God does not count our sins against us. Positively, God credits our account with righteousness.

Paul’s similar language in 2 Corinthians 5:19-21: (see whole passage)

“... God was reconciling the world to himself in Christ, not counting men's sins against them. ... God made him who had no sin to be sin for us, so that in him we might become the righteousness of God. “

“Christ became sin with our sins, in order we might become righteous with God's righteousness.” -- God does not count our sins against us ... Because of Christ's work ... but reconciles us to Himself. That, too, is a double accounting.

- **A “Double Blessing” In A Three-Fold Process:**

v. 6 “David says the same thing when he speaks of the blessedness of the man to whom God credits righteousness apart from works.”

vv. 7-8: “Blessed are they whose transgressions are forgiven, whose sins are covered. 8 Blessed is the man whose sin the Lord will never count against him.”

In verse 6 we have the “blessedness” or “happiness of the man to whom God credits righteousness apart from works”. The believer has a kind of joy that results from God's own righteousness. (That man or woman doesn't have to do anything to earn it or deserve it.)

See: Romans 5:6-8

David's own words, “Blessed are they whose transgressions are forgiven, whose sins are covered.”

God is doing two things; He is forgiving transgressions and covering sins -- the best possible outcome when we have either trespassed a boundary – or failed to live up to an expected behavior.

Both of God's actions are a negative process: He is removing what should have been credited – or rather – debited to our account.

David's assurance: “Those entries will be covered.” See: Psalm 51:1, 9:

“... According to your great compassion blot out my transgressions.

...Hide your face from my sins and blot out all my iniquity

A Second Part: "Blessed is the man whose sin the Lord will never count against him."

For every time, we had a suspicion that one day all of our sins would be brought up again – especially on the Judgement Day – David says, "No! We are blessed. We are happy because God will never count our sin against us."

David's words in Psalms 103:12: "As far as the east is from the west, so far has he removed our transgressions from us."

- **Conclusion:**

David confirms what Paul says was Abraham's experience: Abraham believed God and it was accounted to him as righteousness. David trusted God and God accounted to him a righteousness he did not deserve, earn, or work for.

David received a righteousness that he couldn't have received any other way than as a free gift of God.

That is Paul's whole point: "The blessedness of the man to whom God credits righteousness apart from works."