

The Blessing of Abraham

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“CHRIST hath redeemed us from the curse of the law. . . *that* the blessing of Abraham might come on the Gentiles through Jesus Christ; *that* we might receive the promise of the Spirit through faith” (Gal. 3:13, 14).

We are redeemed from the curse of the law, in order that we may have the blessing of Abraham; and we receive the blessing of Abraham, in order that we may receive the promise of the Spirit.

Without being redeemed from the curse of the law, we cannot have the blessing of Abraham. And without the blessing of Abraham, we cannot have the promise of the Spirit. Without the blessing of Abraham no one need ask for the gift of the Holy Spirit; for without that it cannot be given. However much a person may desire the gift of the Spirit, and however much he may ask, he cannot have it unless he has the blessing of Abraham first.

Not that the Lord does not want to give his Spirit to whomsoever asks; not that he fixes a hard standard, and compels every one, as a sort of penance, to come to that, or else he will not give his Spirit. No, no; but because that for the Lord to give his Holy Spirit to any person who has not the blessing of Abraham would be only to put his seal upon sin, and baptize sin for righteousness. This, of course, God never can do; and this, of course, no one would ever knowingly ask him to do.

It is, therefore, all-important to know what the blessing of Abraham is, and to have it in possession. For when this is so, to all such the Holy Spirit is freely given, and without measure; and every such one that asketh receiveth: for he asks in faith, he asks according to the will of God, and knows that he receives. The blessing of Abraham is the key that opens into the fulness of the Holy Spirit: with this we may enter freely, and enjoy all his treasures; without this we must stand without, and, even though longing for it, can never obtain.

What, then, is the blessing of Abraham? In that same chapter of Galatians, verse 9, we read: “They which be of faith are blessed with faithful Abraham.” They which be of faith *are blessed*, —the blessing comes by faith. And they “are blessed with faithful Abraham.” Abraham obtained the blessing by faith. Faith itself is not the blessing; it is by faith that the blessing is received. It has to be so; for, “Whatsoever is not of faith is sin.”

So, then, the blessing came to Abraham by faith, —the blessing of Abraham is received by faith. What did Abraham receive by faith? —“Abraham believed God, and it was accounted to him for righteousness.” Verse 6. The blessing that Abraham received by faith was righteousness. Is *righteousness by faith*, then, the blessing of Abraham? —It looks like it, doesn't it?

Let us see further, whether this will hold good: “What shall we say then that Abraham our father, as pertaining to the flesh, hath found?” (Rom. 4:1). We know he found a blessing: for the Scripture speaks of the “blessing of Abraham,” and it comes on us through Jesus Christ.

If we are correct in thinking that righteousness by faith is the blessing of Abraham, then when the Scripture would tell us what Abraham found, we should expect it to take up this thought first of all.

How is it, then? —It is even so; for the Scripture proceeds (Rom. 4:2): “For if Abraham were justified [counted righteous] *by works*, he hath whereof to glory; but not before God.” Anything in which a man cannot glory before God is no blessing at all. And as if Abraham had been counted righteous by work, he could not have gloried before God, it is perfectly plain that righteousness by works is not the blessing of Abraham.

What then? “What saith the Scripture? —Abraham believed God, and it was counted unto him for righteousness. Now to him that worketh, is the reward not reckoned of grace, but of debt. But to him that *worketh not*, but believeth on him that justifieth [counteth righteous] the ungodly, his *faith* is counted for *righteousness*” (Rom. 4:3-5). This, then, is righteousness by faith—exactly what Abraham found. Abraham found a blessing; righteousness by faith, then, must be the blessing of Abraham.

But does the Scripture speak of this as a blessing, in such a way that we may be perfectly sure that just this is the blessing of Abraham? Read on: “Even as David also describeth the blessedness of the man unto whom God imputeth righteousness without works” (Rom. 4:6). The word says that Abraham received a blessing by believing God. And then, continuing directly on that subject, the same word says that David describes the *blessedness* of the man who receives what Abraham received. It is certain that there was only “blessedness” in what Abraham received; what Abraham received was righteousness, and he received it by believing God; therefore it is certain that righteousness by faith is the “blessedness,” the blessing, of Abraham.

How does David describe the blessedness of Abraham, and of all other men who receive what Abraham received? —Thus: “Blessed are they who iniquities are forgiven, and whose sins are covered. Blessed is the man to whom the Lord will not impute sin” (Rom. 4:7).

The word “forgiven” is made up of “for” and “given.” When iniquities are “forgiven,” something is given for them. What is it that is given for them? —Righteousness, to be sure; for God has set forth Christ “to declare *his righteousness* for the remission of sins that are past” (Rom. 3:25). And, blessed are they “whose sins are covered.” “He hath covered me with the robe of *righteousness*” (Isa. 61:10).

What *is* imputed to the man to whom sin is *not* imputed? —Righteousness only; for he is describing the man “unto whom God *imputeth righteousness*” (Rom. 4:6).

God gave Abraham *righteousness* for his iniquities; him who was sin, God covered with the robe of *righteousness*; and to him the Lord imputed *righteousness* instead of sin. It

was all the righteousness of God, through and through. This is what Abraham received, and he received it by faith. There was in it blessedness to Abraham. And David describes the blessedness of all other men who receive it. This, then, is the blessing of Abraham.

But the Scripture tells it yet again: "Cometh this *blessedness* then upon the circumcision only, or upon the uncircumcision also? *for we say that faith* was reckoned to Abraham *for righteousness*" (Rom. 4:9). There can be no shadow of doubt, therefore, that *the righteousness of God which is by faith* is in very truth *the blessing of Abraham*.

Now have you the blessing of Abraham? Where did you get the righteousness that you claim, and upon which you depend for acceptance and approval with God? Did you get it from God himself? Did you get it by believing God? or did you get it by "doing your best"?

If you have any righteousness that you did not get from God, then you have no righteousness that you did not get by believing God, then you have none at all. If you have any other righteousness than the righteousness of God, then you have none at all.

It is the righteousness of God, and that alone, which men must seek. None other will avail. "Seek ye first the kingdom of God, and *his* righteousness" (Matt. 6:33). It is a free gift to every soul in the world. "Being justified [counted righteous] freely by his grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus, whom God has set forth. . . to declare his righteousness for the remission of sins that are past" (Rom. 3:24, 25). "Even the righteousness of God which is by faith of Jesus Christ unto all and upon all them that believe; for there is no difference" (Rom. 3:22).

Abraham believed God, and it was imputed to him for righteousness. "Now it was not written for his sake alone, that it was imputed to him; but for us also, to whom it shall be imputed, if we believe on him that raised up Jesus our Lord from the dead" (Rom. 4:23, 24). And you *do* believe on him. Then accept his righteousness freely, and in all its fulness, as freely and fully as it is given.

The righteousness of God, which is by faith, is the blessing of Abraham. They which be of faith are blessed with faithful Abraham. Thank the Lord for it, and thus accept the blessing of Abraham. For Christ has redeemed us from the curse of the law, —he *has* done it, —*that the blessing of Abraham* might come on us. Please do not, by unbelief, keep that blessing away. Cast away unbelief. Believe God, and let the blessing of Abraham, the righteousness of God, flow in, and fill all the life with its power and its sweet savor.