

New Morning Magical

You're just like Abraham (sort of)

We'll be in Chapter 2 of the Apostle Paul's letter to the Roman ecclesia today, beginning with verse 16:

16 in the day when God will be judging the hidden things of humanity, according to my evangel, through Jesus Christ.

Let me say first that I'll be skipping through parts of Romans that don't advance our theme of going free. All of Romans is valuable to study, but it's not our purpose to engage in an exhaustive study, verse by verse. Also, sometimes it's obvious that Paul is focusing on some issue that he knows needs addressed. Where he does that in his Roman epistle, we'll glean what is particularly useful for us today and skip over the rest.

In verse 16, it's important to remember that the Father "*will be judging the hidden things of humanity*" and He'll do that through Christ; that is, through the agency or office of the Messiah. This passage suggests that Paul is letting the Romans know, as he did the Corinthians, about what he calls, "*the dais of Christ*"; the judges' stand in front of which we will all stand, where we will give account for our lives and receive whatever level of award that we achieved.

You and I will not escape judgment, according to Romans 16, but, being faithful to the word and will of the Father, we need not fear it either, because, when we grasp all that Yeshua accomplished for us, we are living to Him and not to ourselves. This will provide a pleasing testimony at the dais of Christ.

Now we're going to move all the way into Chapter 3:

20 ...by works of law, no flesh at all shall be justified in His **[the Father's]** sight, for through law is the recognition of sin.

You know more about what justification by faith is than the Roman ecclesia did. Here, Paul puts all the believers in Rome on notice that no justification was ever achieved through the Law. He goes even further by reminding them that sin was only recognized – or highlighted – through, or because of, the Law given through Moses.

21 Yet now, apart from law, a righteousness of God is manifest (being attested by the law and the prophets),

22 yet a righteousness of God through Jesus Christ's faith, for all, and on all who are believing, for there is no distinction,
23 for all sinned and are wanting of the glory of God.

Notice that the Law and the prophets attested, or testified to figuratively, God's righteousness. His righteousness was manifested literally – not just attested to – APART from Law.

24 Being justified gratuitously in His grace, through the deliverance which is in Christ Jesus
25 (Whom God purposed for a Propitiatory shelter, through faith in His blood, for a display of His righteousness because of the passing over of the penalties of sins which occurred before in the forbearance of God),
26 toward the display of His righteousness in the current era, for Him to be just and a Justifier of the one who is of the faith of Jesus.

Look at the word, "*gratuitously*," in verse 24: in Greek, it is transliterated as "*give-gush*." We get the idea that the Father, "*in His grace*," gives justification to us "gushingly"; He isn't the least bit stingy about justifying us; He's pouring it out fully and freely, without measure. Of course, He does this "through" – as a result of – "*the deliverance [aka, salvation] which is in Christ Jesus*."

In verse 25, Paul introduces us to the concept of Christ as a "Propitiatory shelter," which is where we gain the Father's favor or goodwill. Of course propitiation comes "*through faith in His [Yeshua's] blood*." Paul goes on to make note that the Father's righteousness is displayed by virtue of the "*passing over*" of any penalties associated with sins that "*occurred before in [His] forbearance*"; that is, because of Christ's sacrifice of His blood, the Father refrained from enforcing our rightful debt or obligation to Him for our sins.

Finally, in verse 26, Paul says that all this acts as at least a partial display of the Father's righteousness today ("*in the current era*," or season), so that we could know Him as just and as the One Who justifies us who are out of Jesus Christ's faith. Meaning that our acquittal of all charges against us, is won by Yeshua's faith in His Father's promise. We've looked at this last part before, but we are fortunate to be able to see this marvelous truth more than once.

Just a quick aside here: Can you imagine what it was like to be a member of one of the ecclesias that Paul shepherded, being able to read only one of his letters, probably several times, as opposed to being able to read ALL of his letters, as we are today?!

27 Where, then, is boasting? It is debarred! Through what law?

28 Of works? No! But through faith's law. For we are reckoning a man to be justified by faith apart from works of law.

There is no cause for boasting other than through "*faith's law*." What does this mean? Simply this: trusting God at all times for all things, period. You and I are justified – declared not guilty and acquitted of all charges by the Father, because Yeshua trusted Him first, and then we trust in the Father through Yeshua. It may make more sense to think of "*faith's law*" as "*the law of trust*," or, "*the law of trusting*."

29 Or is He the god of the Jews only? Is He not of the nations also?

30 Yes, of the nations also, if so be that God is One, Who will be justifying the Circumcision out of faith and the Uncircumcision through faith.

31 Are we, then, nullifying law through faith? May it not be coming to that! Nay, we are sustaining law. ***[In other words, we fulfill the Law because of the life of the Spirit in us.]***

In Chapter 4, we find another unprecedented revelation of Paul's: That we out of the nations, or Gentiles, are reckoned righteous in the Father's eyes as Abraham was, because of faith, and circumcision has nothing to do with trusting God.

3 For what is the scripture saying? Now "Abraham believes God, and it is reckoned to him for righteousness."

4 Now to the worker, the wage is not reckoned as a favor, but as a debt.

5 Yet to him who is not working, yet is believing on Him Who is justifying the irreverent, his faith is reckoned for righteousness.

The Father reckons trust for righteousness. If it were out of something we do, it wouldn't be trust, or faith, at all, but a debt we owed. You and I trust the Father today; we believe Him, just as Abraham did when He was still called Abram, and before he received the sign of circumcision, as we'll see shortly.

6 Even as David also is telling of the happiness of the man to whom God is reckoning righteousness apart from acts ***[Now Paul quotes the Old Testament]:***

7 Happy they whose lawlessnesses were pardoned and whose sins were covered over!

8 Happy the man to whom the Lord by no means should be reckoning sin!

It would seem that David could have been seeing prophetically, because the idea of YaHoVeH NOT reckoning sin was unthinkable for a Jew in David's time.

9 This happiness, then, is it for the Circumcision, or for the Uncircumcision also? For we are saying, "To Abraham faith is reckoned for righteousness."

10 How then, is it reckoned? Being in circumcision or in uncircumcision? Not in circumcision, but in uncircumcision.

Paul's point is that righteousness was reckoned *before* circumcision became the sign that distinguished God's people from all others.

11 And he obtained the sign of circumcision, a seal of the righteousness of the faith which was in uncircumcision [*in other words BEFORE Abraham circumcised himself and all the males of his house*], for him [*Abraham*] to be the father of all those who are believing through uncircumcision, for righteousness to be reckoned to them,

12 and the father of the Circumcision, not to those of the Circumcision only, but to those also who are observing the elements of the faith in the footprints of our father Abraham, in uncircumcision.

To the Jews of his time Paul's statements would have been very controversial, except that the Scriptures agreed with him. Clearly, verse 12 refers to believing, uncircumcised Gentiles. Obviously, the Father honors trust in Him over any outward sign. Anyone can be circumcised, but believing Him, trusting Him, is what He cares about.

13 For not through law is the promise to Abraham, or to his Seed, for him to be enjoyer of the allotment of the world, but through faith's righteousness [*that is, righteousness accorded because of one's trust in the Father*].

14 For if those of law are enjoyers of the allotment, faith has been made void and the promise has been nullified,

In verse 14, Paul says that where the Law is being observed, faith is unnecessary; trust is not needed when you follow all those rules and regs; plus, you'll have a twice daily sacrifice to make up for your inability to observe all the Law anyway.

15 for the law is producing indignation. Now where no law is, neither is there transgression.

16 Therefore it is of faith that it may accord with grace, for the promise to be confirmed to the entire seed, not to those of the law only, but to those also of the faith of Abraham,

who is father of us all,

17 according as it is written that, A father of many nations have I appointed you -- facing which, he believes it of the God Who is vivifying the dead and calling what is not as if it were --

18 who, being beyond expectation, believes in expectation, for him to become the father of many nations, according to that which has been declared, "Thus shall be your seed."

So until next time,

May Yahweh bless you and keep you;
May Yahweh light up His face toward you
and be gracious to you;
May Yahweh lift His face to you
and appoint peace for you.

AMEN