

The Epistle to the Galatians
Lesson #8 • Galatians 3:6-9
“Consider Abraham”

• HANDOUT •

► In Study Lesson 8, Paul goes to the Old Testament to continue his teaching regarding the source of true salvation and to whom salvation is being offered. He begins with Father Abraham. By using OT scriptures, Paul is removing the idea that Christianity stands in opposition to Judaism and the Law. Surprisingly, the same righteous standards found in the New Testament are also found in the Old Testament. Furthermore, the Old Testament scriptures support the concept that both Jews or Gentiles are able to have the same standing before the Lord.

Galatians 3:6 • Consider Abraham: He believed God, and it was credited to him as righteousness.

- Q: Paul is writing to the Galatians who were Gentile believers. His teaching is dependent upon Gentiles having knowledge of Abraham, the “Father of the Hebrews.” Would Gentiles have enough knowledge of Abraham to be able to consider him, as Paul requests?
- Q: Of all the people Paul could choose to use as an example, why Abraham?
- Q: What is the point that Paul is making when he said Abraham believed God and it was credited to him as righteousness?
- Q: So if the Judaizers were using Abraham as their case-in-point for adhering to the Law as their only means to be accepted by God, why would Paul also use Abraham to prove that their teaching was false?
- Q: It is one thing for Paul to declare that Abraham was justified by his faith, but how is he going to prove the truth of his statement, to the satisfaction of the Judaizers?

Q: Where does the righteousness with which any of us are credited, come from?

Q: What Paul was teaching here is sometimes referred to as the “**Great Divine Exchange.**”
What does that mean?

Paul wrote, with great clarity, about this teaching in his second letter to the Corinthians ..

2 Corinthians 5:21 • "God made Him [Christ] who had no sin, to be sin for us, so that, in Him, we might become the righteousness of God."

Q: How are we to understand the phrase “in Him?”

**Paul continues his argument about Abraham's faith
by extending salvation, by faith, to Abraham's true children in the present time ...**

Galatians 3:7 • Understand, then, that those who believe are children of Abraham.

Q: Who are the “children of Abraham?”

Q: What does being “children of Abraham” have to do with faith vs works?

Judaizers:

Paul:

Galatians 3:8-9 • The Scripture foresaw that God would justify the Gentiles by faith, and announced the gospel in advance to Abraham: "All nations will be blessed through you."
So those who have faith are blessed along with Abraham, the man of faith.

Q: What is significant about Paul writing that “*the Scripture foresaw...?*”

Q: How do we know that the “all nations” in the statement “*all nations will be blessed through you*” applies not only to the “children of Abraham,” but to the Gentile nations?

Q: Why is this concept so important for us to understand?

Q: If God always intended to include all the peoples of the world to have an opportunity for Salvation, and not just the Jews, why then did God even select the Jews to be His specific Covenant people?

Here is scriptural support for this statement ..

[LR] Isaiah 49:6 · The Lord says: "It is too small a thing for you to be my servant to restore the tribes of Jacob and bring back those of Israel I have kept. I will also make you a light for the Gentiles, that you may bring my salvation to the ends of the earth."

Q: Because Israel failed to do what God called them to do, does this mean that the N.T. church has replaced Israel? Is that what Paul is teaching here?

Q: How does all of this affect the claims and demands of the Judaizers that Gentiles must become Jews to have salvation?

**James wrestled with this same issue,
but he discussed it from a different angle ...**

James 2:14: 17-18 · What good is it, my brothers, if a man claims to have faith but has no deeds? Can such faith save him? In the same way, faith by itself, if it is not accompanied by action, is dead. But someone will say, "You have faith; I have deeds." Show me your faith without deeds, and I will show you my faith by what I do.

- Q: What does the argument that the Judaizers were making regarding the need for Gentiles to convert to Judaism to be accepted as a Christian have to do with faith and works?
- Q: What are the implication of the statement that *“those who have faith are blessed along with Abraham, the man of faith?”*



Next Time • Lesson #9

~~ The Law's Curse ~~

Galatians 3:10-14

