

11.

GALATIANS 3:6-9

I. REJECT THOSE WHO TEACH YOU A DIFFERENT DOCTRINE

C. Because of Teachings of the Scripture

1. About Abraham's faith

Introduction

In these verses, Paul cited a third major reason for the Galatians to turn away from believing that works of the law were necessary for salvation. That reason was the teaching found in the Scriptures. That reason was the most powerful of all, because the Scriptures come directly from God. The Scriptures are God's exact words, infallibly revealed through inspired men. They give truth without error. Paul insisted that the Scriptures do not teach salvation by works of the law but salvation by grace through faith alone. If they would just read the Scriptures that God had revealed many years before they would know not to believe that salvation either begins or grows through works.

No doubt, when Paul was in Galatia, he had showed them what the Hebrew Scriptures say about salvation by grace, but they obviously had not grasped it firmly enough. So he quoted and explained some key Scriptures from the Hebrew Bible that affirm the doctrine of salvation by grace through faith. The first two of those Scriptures concern blessings God promised to Abraham.

Outline

	<u>Pages</u>
C. [Because of teachings of the Scriptures [Old Testament] (3:6-9)	
1. [Scriptures about Abraham's faith] (3:6-9)	2
a. Since [the Scriptures say] (3:6-7),	2
(1) <i>"Abraham believed God, and it was credited to him for righteousness"</i> [Gen 15:6] (3:6).	2
(2) You know, therefore, that the ones of faith, these are Abraham's sons (3:7)?	2
b. Also the Scriptures (3:8-9),	2
(1) Foreseeing that God would justify the nations by faith (3:8b),	2
(2) Preached the Gospel in advance to Abraham, [by saying] that (3:8c-9)	2
(a) <i>"Through you all the nations will be blessed"</i> [Gen. 12:3] (3:8b).	2
(b) So the ones of faith are blessed with faithful Abraham (3:9).	2

Comments

Verses 6-7. **6** Since [the Scriptures say], *“Abraham believed God, and it was credited to him for righteousness,”*

“You know, therefore, that the ones of faith, these are Abraham’s sons.

The third reason Paul gave the Galatians for not deserting the doctrine of free grace was that it was taught by the Scriptures. When Paul spoke of Scriptures, he was talking about the Hebrew Scriptures, which Christians call the Old Testament. It may be that the Book of Galatians was the first New Testament book to be written. The New Testament Scriptures did not exist, so the only Scriptures Paul had to refer to were the Old Testament. His study of the Scriptures in Arabia and Damascus had showed him that the Hebrew Scriptures teach that salvation comes by God’s grace and by people’s faith, not by the ritual laws God revealed to Moses. Paul probably was amazed when he began to understand that truth, because he had been taught and had believed that keeping the laws of Moses was the only way to be saved. However, when he came to understand that the Scriptures Moses had written taught just the opposite, he was amazed that he had not seen it before. He had come to understand that the laws of Sinai symbolize the life that a believer is to live after he is saved. They do not describe the way to be saved. Salvation by grace through faith is clearly taught in the Book of the Law, but it is taught by the covenant, not by the ceremonial laws of Sinai. Since Paul had come to understand that truth, he earnestly wanted the Galatians to understand it also. Thus, he quoted for the Galatians passages from the Hebrew Scriptures that teach salvation by grace through faith.

First, Paul quoted two passages that teach that Abraham was saved by faith and that he was called to pass on that same faith salvation to the Gentile nations. Those verses are discussed in this volume.

The first of the two passages Paul quoted was Genesis 15:6, which says, *“Abraham believed God, and it was credited to him for righteousness.”* The verse clearly says that Abraham received righteousness because he believed God. Paul said

that from that verse the Galatians could know that Abraham received salvation and righteousness by faith, not by his works. Therefore, Abraham’s true children are those who believe as he believed, not those who are descended from him physically. Abraham was the progenitor of the nation of Israel and the father of the faithful. If he was saved by faith, those who believed in Abraham’s God should know they could be saved only in the same way.

Anyone who believed in Abraham’s God should have known that Abraham made many mistakes. He could not have been saved by his deeds, because he had too many faults and committed too many sins. Abraham overcame his sins because of his faith. If Abraham was made just by his faith, then all those who trust Abraham’s God should know they receive salvation the same way. The Scriptural teachings about Abraham taught Paul’s doctrine long before Paul was ever born, all the way back to the father of God’s chosen nation. Salvation by faith was not a new teaching. It was the only way that had ever been taught by the Scriptures. It had to be the one and only true way of salvation.

Verse 8-9. **8** So the Scriptures, foreseeing that God would justify the nations by faith, preached that Gospel in advance to Abraham, [by saying] that *“Through you all the nations will be blessed.”*

9 So the ones of faith are blessed through faithful Abraham.

Paul pointed to Scriptures that reveal another even more amazing truth, which was that the blessing of salvation that Abraham received was available also to all the nations through the same way that Abraham received it. He quoted Genesis 12:3, which describes God’s call to Abraham while he was still in Ur of the Chaldees (Acts 7:2-3). In that call, God made his first offer of the covenant to Abraham. He stated the call in the form of a covenant. In that covenant, he offered Abraham amazing blessings if he would believe and obey, but he also made provision for all the nations to receive the same blessings. Paul quoted God’s incredible statement, *“Through you all the nations will be blessed.”* The way the nations would be blessed through Abraham would be for him to share with them the truths God had revealed to him. Thus,

they would receive God's blessings the same way Abraham received them, by grace through faith. Therefore, anyone who has faith in Abraham's God would be blessed right along with believing Abraham. Paul concluded that, since the Hebrew Scriptures teach that both Abraham and the nations are blessed and saved by faith, they definitely cannot also teach salvation by the works of the law.

In the covenant with Abraham, God made provision for the salvation of all the nations. That provision included the Galatians. They needed to

recognize that all the way back to the time of Abraham God had been teaching salvation by grace for all the nations. God had revealed that salvation for the nations was by grace through faith at the same time He first had revealed that truth to Abraham. It was unreasonable that they should turn away from the salvation God had planned for them at the same time He had offered it to Israel and turn to believing in a false salvation by the works of the law.