

WEEK 3 – OUTLINE

The Seed for the Fulfillment of God's Purpose

Scripture Reading: Gen. 12:7; 13:15-16; 15:2-6; Gal. 3:7, 16, 29; Rom. 3:24; 4:2-5

DAY 1

I. For the fulfillment of His purpose God must have the seed (Gen. 12:7; 13:15-16; 15:3, 5):

- A. The seed is first the individual Christ and then the corporate Christ, composed of Christ as the Head and all the believers as the Body (Gal. 3:16, 29; 1 Cor. 12:12).
- B. As the seed of Abraham, Christ became the all-inclusive life-giving Spirit so that the believers in Christ, who are Abraham's seed, may inherit the consummated Spirit, the consummation of the processed Triune God, as their divine inheritance—their divine blessing for eternity (15:45b; 2 Cor. 3:17; Gal. 3:14, 29; Acts 26:18; Eph. 1:14a).
- C. Christ is the unique seed of Abraham; in God's eyes, Abraham has only one seed, that is, Christ (Gen. 12:7a; 13:15; 21:12; 22:17; Gal. 3:16b):
 - 1. Christ is the seed, and the seed is the heir who inherits the promises (v. 16).
 - 2. Christ is not only the seed who inherits the promises but also the blessing of the promises to be inherited by us.
- D. As the seed of Abraham, Christ in His humanity was crucified and became a curse on our behalf, being forsaken by God, so that we might receive the promise of the Spirit as the greatest blessing (vv. 13-14).

DAY 2

- E. As the seed of Abraham, Christ became not only our Redeemer and Savior but also the life-giving Spirit; the life-giving Spirit—the Spirit as the consummation of the processed Triune God—is a transfigured descendant of Abraham (v. 16; 1 Cor. 15:45b).
- F. In order to be the seed of Abraham, we must be in Christ and be one with Christ (Gal. 3:29):
 - 1. Since Abraham has only one seed—Christ—to be Abraham's seed we must be of Christ, be a part of Christ.
 - 2. Because we are one with Christ, the unique seed, we too are Abraham's seed.
- G. On the one hand, the seed is the One who fulfills the promise; on the other hand, the seed is those who enjoy the promise, which has been fulfilled (vv. 16, 29):

1. In the matter of fulfilling the promise, we have no part; only Christ, the unique seed, is qualified to fulfill God's promise to Abraham.
2. In the matter of enjoying the fulfilled promise, the seed becomes many—the many sons of Abraham (v. 7):

DAY 3

- a. In order to enjoy the fulfilled promise, we must be one with Christ (1 Cor. 6:17).
- b. Outside of Christ, we cannot enjoy the fulfillment of the promise given by God to Abraham.
- c. For fulfillment, the seed is one; for enjoyment, the seed includes all those who believe in Christ (John 3:15-16).

II. Through faith in Christ Jesus, the unique seed, we are all sons of God and sons of Abraham (Gal. 3:7, 26, 29):

- A. Faith in Christ makes the New Testament believers sons of God, a relationship altogether in life (4:7; Rom. 8:14; Heb. 2:10):
 1. Faith in Christ brings us into Christ, making us one with Christ, in whom is the sonship (John 3:15-16).
 2. We must be identified with Christ through faith so that in Him we may be sons of God.
 3. When we believed into Christ, the divine life with the divine nature—in fact, the Divine Being of the Triune God Himself—entered into us, and we were born of God to become sons of God (vv. 15-16, 6; 1 John 3:1).

DAY 4

- B. Our true status is that in Christ and by the organic union we are both sons of God and sons of Abraham (Gal. 3:26, 7):
 1. Christ is the sphere in which this takes place (1 Cor. 1:30; John 15:4-5).
 2. We and Christ have been joined in a marvelous organic union; because of this union, we are sons of God and sons of Abraham (1 Cor. 6:17).

III. “The word of Jehovah came to him, saying,...[He] who will come out from your own body shall be your heir. And He brought him outside and said, Look now toward the heavens, and count the stars, if you are able to count them. And He said to him, So shall your seed be” (Gen. 15:4-5):

- A. The seed needed for the fulfillment of God's purpose could not be anything that Abraham already possessed (Eliezer—v. 2) or could produce out of himself (Ishmael—16:15).
- B. Only that which God worked into Abraham could bring forth from

Abraham the required seed.

- C. Likewise, only what God works into us through His grace can bring forth Christ as the seed to fulfill God's purpose (Gal. 1:16; 2:20; 4:19; Eph. 3:17; Phil. 2:13).
- D. In order to fulfill God's purpose, we need to receive God's grace so that Christ can be wrought into us as the seed (John 1:16; 1 Cor. 15:10).

DAY 5

IV. Abraham “believed Jehovah, and He accounted it to him as righteousness” (Gen. 15:6; cf. Gal. 3:6; Rom. 4:2-3):

- A. Believing God was Abraham's spontaneous reaction to God's repeated appearing to him; his believing was the springing up within him of the element that God had transfused into him (Acts 7:2; Gen. 12:1-3; 13:14-17).
- B. In Genesis 15:6 Abraham did not believe God to obtain outward blessings for his own existence; he believed that God was able to work something into him to bring forth a seed out of his own being for the fulfillment of God's purpose:
 - 1. This kind of faith is precious to God and is accounted by Him as righteousness (Rom. 4:3).
 - 2. Abraham was justified by such a faith (vv. 2, 5).
- C. God's reaction to Abraham's believing was to justify him, that is, to account him as righteous (Gen. 15:6):
 - 1. Abraham believed God's word in a definite way, and God accounted it to him as righteousness (Rom. 4:2-5).
 - 2. God's justification is not a reward (wages) for our good works (labor); it is grace freely given to us through Christ's redemption (3:24; 4:4):
 - a. Since God's justification is reckoned according to His grace, it is not based on or according to our works (vv. 4-5).
 - b. Our works can by no means replace God's grace; God's grace must be absolute (3:24).
 - 3. For God to justify Abraham means that God was happy with Abraham and that Abraham was in harmony with God.

DAY 6

- D. Abraham's being justified by God was not related to sin; rather, it was for the gaining of a seed to produce a kingdom that will inherit the world (4:3, 13):

1. Romans 4 indicates that justification is not merely for us to be delivered out of God's condemnation but even more for God to gain many sons to constitute the Body of Christ as the kingdom of God for the fulfillment of His purpose (8:29-30; 12:4-5; 14:17).
2. Justification enables Abraham and all his believing heirs to inherit the world and to exercise the dominion of God on earth (4:13).
3. The purpose of God's justification is to have a reproduction of Christ in millions of saints, who become the members of His Body; the Body then becomes the kingdom of God on earth (12:4-5; 14:17).

Morning Nourishment

Gen. 12:7 "And Jehovah appeared to Abram and said, To your seed I will give this land..."

Gal. 3:16 "But to Abraham were the promises spoken and to his seed. He does not say, And to the seeds, as concerning many, but as concerning one: "And to your seed," who is Christ."

The seed of Abraham is first the individual Christ and then the corporate Christ (1 Cor. 12:12), composed of Christ as the Head and all His believers (Gal. 3:29) as the Body. All the believers in Christ, as the members of the corporate Christ, are included in this seed as the heirs of God's promised blessing. Eventually, the eternal New Jerusalem, the great, corporate Christ, will be the ultimate consummation of the seed of Abraham (Gen. 22:17; Rev. 21:12-14). (The Conclusion of the New Testament, p. 3301)

Today's Reading

Christ as the seed of Abraham has redeemed us out of the curse of the law so that the blessing of Abraham might come to the nations in Him. Christ died a substitutionary death on the cross to deliver us from the curse brought in by Adam. Then in resurrection Christ, who was the unique seed of Abraham as the last Adam, became the life-giving Spirit. The resurrected Christ as the life-giving Spirit is the transfigured descendant of Abraham, the seed of Abraham, dispensed into us to make us the sons of Abraham, the corporate seed of Abraham, those who can receive and inherit the consummated Spirit as the blessing of Abraham (Gal. 3:7, 14; 4:28). The blessing promised to Abraham comes to us through Christ's redemption; now in Christ all the nations will be blessed. The curse has been taken away, and the blessing has come. Before we believed into Christ and were saved, we were cursed under the law. Having believed into Christ, we are no longer cursed; we are blessed through Christ in His humanity as the seed of Abraham, and we are blessed with the consummated Spirit, who is the consummation of the processed Triune God (3:13-14). As the seed of Abraham, Christ brought to us the processed and consummated Triune God as our blessing for our enjoyment. The all-inclusive Spirit, who the all-inclusive Christ as the seed of Abraham has become, is the aggregate of the all-embracing blessing of the full gospel of God in Christ for the divine dispensing according to the divine economy. (The Conclusion of the New Testament, pp. 3294-3295)

We know from Galatians 3:16 that Christ is Abraham's unique seed. Christ is the seed, and the seed is the heir who inherits the promises....In order to inherit the promised blessing, we must be one with Christ. Outside of Him, we cannot inherit the promises given by God to Abraham. In God's eyes Abraham has only one seed, Christ. We must be in Him that we may participate in the promise given to Abraham. He is not only the seed inheriting the promise, but also the blessing of the promise for inheritance. For the Galatian believers to turn back from Christ to the law meant that they would forfeit both the Heir and the inheritance of the promises. (Life-study of Galatians, p. 172)

As the seed of Abraham, Christ in His humanity was crucified and became a curse on our behalf to redeem us out of the curse of the law. Galatians 3:1 mentions that Jesus Christ was crucified. Verse 13 goes on to say, "Christ has redeemed us out of the curse of the law, having become a curse on our behalf; because it is written, 'Cursed is everyone hanging on a tree.'" Christ as our Substitute on the cross not only bore the curse for us but also became a curse for us.

Not only did Christ redeem us out from the curse; He even became a curse on our behalf. This indicates that He was absolutely abandoned by God. God forsook Christ economically and also considered Him a curse. On the cross Christ accomplished the great work of bringing us out from the curse of the law, working to bear our sins and to remove the curse. (The Conclusion of the New Testament, pp. 3286-3287)

Further Reading: The Conclusion of the New Testament, msgs. 327-328

Morning Nourishment

Gal. 3:13-14 "Christ has redeemed us out of the curse of the law, having become a curse on our behalf; because it is written, "Cursed is everyone hanging on a tree"; in order that the blessing of Abraham might come to the Gentiles in Christ Jesus, that we might receive the promise of the Spirit through faith."

The Spirit as the consummation of the Triune God for the dispensing of Himself into the believers of Christ is the seed of Abraham (1 Cor. 15:45b; 2 Cor. 3:17-18; Rom. 8:9). The last Adam mentioned in 1 Corinthians 15:45 is the seed of Abraham. This seed became not only our Redeemer and Savior but also the life-giving Spirit. The life-giving Spirit is a transfigured descendant of Abraham. The top blessing, the consummate blessing, to us sinners is God Himself as the life-giving Spirit. On the one hand, the life-giving Spirit is a transfigured descendant of Abraham, and on the other hand, He is the very Triune God. This life-giving Spirit is the consummated Spirit who is the consummation of the processed Triune God. This is the real blessing. (The Central Line of the Divine Revelation, pp. 87-88)

Today's Reading

Now, as believers we are no longer merely descendants of Americans, Chinese, or Japanese. We are Abraham's seed. We are all one family, and our surname is Abraham, because Abraham is our father (Rom. 4:12).

Our spiritual blessing for eternity is to inherit the consummated Spirit, the consummation of the processed Triune God, as our inheritance. In the new heaven and new earth in the New Jerusalem, we will enjoy the processed Triune God, who is the all-inclusive, consummated, life-giving Spirit. This is our blessing. Even today, the most enjoyable thing to us is the indwelling Spirit. (The Central Line of the Divine Revelation, p. 89)

In Galatians 3:29 Paul continues, "And if you are of Christ, then you are Abraham's seed, heirs according to promise." Abraham has only one seed, Christ (v. 16). Hence, to be Abraham's seed we must be of Christ, be a part of Christ. Because we are one with Christ, we too are Abraham's seed, heirs according to promise, inheriting God's promised blessing, which is the all-inclusive Spirit as the ultimate consummation of the processed God, who is our portion. Under the new testament the believers as God's chosen people, being sons of full age, are such heirs, not under law but in Christ. (The Conclusion of the New Testament, p. 3300)

In Galatians 3 Paul speaks of the seed of Abraham (vv. 16, 19, 29) and the sons of Abraham (v. 7). The seed is singular, whereas the sons are plural....Concerning God's promise to Abraham, there is the aspect of fulfillment and the aspect of enjoyment. To fulfill the promise is one thing, but to enjoy the blessing of the promise is another. Concerning promises made by one person to another, the one who fulfills the promise is seldom the one who enjoys the blessing of the promise. Usually the person who makes the promise is the one to fulfill the promise, and the one to whom the promise is made is the one who enjoys its blessing. In the case of God's promise to Abraham, God, strictly speaking, is not the one to fulfill the promise. Instead, the promise is fulfilled by the seed, Christ (v. 16). Christ has fulfilled God's promise to Abraham. Thus, the fulfillment of this promise does not depend on the many sons of Abraham, but on the unique seed of Abraham. However, with respect to the enjoyment of the blessing of this promise, the many sons are involved. Whereas the unique seed is the fulfiller, the many sons are the enjoyers.

As the unique seed in Galatians 3, Christ not only inherits the promise, but He also fulfills the promise. The promise God made to Abraham was fulfilled by Christ as Abraham's seed.

In the matter of fulfilling the promise, we have no part. Only Christ, the unique seed, is qualified to fulfill God's promise to Abraham. In this sense, the seed is uniquely one. But in the aspect of enjoying the fulfilled promise, the seed becomes many, the many sons of Abraham. (Life-study of Galatians, pp. 171-172)

Further Reading: The Central Line of the Divine Revelation, msgs. 8-9

Morning Nourishment

Gal. 3:7 "Know then that they who are of faith, these are sons of Abraham."

26 "For you are all sons of God through faith in Christ Jesus."

29 "And if you are of Christ, then you are Abraham's seed, heirs according to promise."

God intended to give the promise to Abraham according to His eternal purpose. Before this promise was accomplished, the law was given to serve as the custodian of God's chosen people. Then, at the appointed time, Christ, the promised seed, came to fulfill God's promise to Abraham. When Christ came, the fulfillment of God's promised blessing also came. This is grace. Hence, grace came with Christ and with the fulfillment. (Life-study of Galatians, p. 178)

Today's Reading

We must turn from the law, the custodian, and stay with Christ, the One who has fulfilled the promise. Of course, this means we should also stay with grace and faith. Then we shall be included in Christ, the unique seed, to inherit the fulfilled promise and to enjoy the blessing of the promise to Abraham. This blessing is the processed Triune God as the all-inclusive life-giving Spirit.

As the unique seed of Abraham, Christ includes all the believers who have been baptized into Him (Gal. 3:27-28). In one sense, when Christ died on the cross, He was crucified alone as our Redeemer. But in another sense, when He was crucified, we were with Him. For the accomplishment of redemption, Christ was crucified alone. But for terminating the old creation, Christ included us in His crucifixion. In the same principle, in the fulfillment of the promise made by God to Abraham, we are not included as part of the unique seed. We can have no share in the fulfillment of this promise. However, for inheriting the promise and enjoying it, we are included. Christ alone fulfilled the promise. But Christ and we share in the enjoyment of the promise. Therefore, on the one hand, the seed is uniquely one; on the other hand, it is all-inclusive. For fulfillment, the seed is one; for inheritance and enjoyment, the seed is all-inclusive, including all believers who have been baptized into Christ.

Works of law make people disciples of Moses (John 9:28) with nothing whatever related to life. Faith in Christ makes the New Testament believers sons of God, a relationship altogether in life. We, the New Testament believers, were born sons of fallen Adam, and in Adam, because of transgressions, we were under the law of Moses. But we have been reborn to become sons of Abraham and have been freed from the law of Moses by faith in Christ. We are sons of Abraham not by natural birth, but by faith. Hence, our being sons of Abraham is based upon the principle of faith. It is based on our believing, not on our working. Our basis for being sons of Abraham surely is not natural descent. We are Abraham's sons according to the principle of faith.

We are both sons of Abraham and sons of God because we have been baptized into Christ and have put on Christ (Gal. 3:27). To believe is to believe into Christ (John 3:16), and to be baptized is to be baptized also into Christ. Faith in Christ brings us into Christ and makes us one with Christ, in whom is the sonship. We must be identified with Christ through faith so that in Him we may be sons of God. By both faith and baptism, we have been immersed into Christ, we have thus put on Christ, and we have become identified with Him.

Some Christians oppose the use of the term God-men and even defame us for saying that the believers in Christ, the sons of God through faith in Christ, are God-men. But according to the Bible, it is a divine fact that human beings can become sons of God. When we believed in Christ, the divine life with the divine nature—in fact, the Divine Being of the Triune God Himself—entered into us, and we were born of God to become sons of God. Just as a man's son partakes of his life and nature, so we as God's sons partake of the divine life and nature. (Life-study of Galatians, pp. 178, 173-174, 176, 175)

Further Reading: Life-study of Galatians, msgs. 17-19

Morning Nourishment

Gen. 15:4-5 "But then the word of Jehovah came to him, saying, This man shall not be your heir, but he who will come out from your own body shall be your heir. And He brought him outside and said, Look now toward the heavens, and count the stars, if you are able to count them. And He said to him, So shall your seed be."

In what way are the sons of God also the sons of Abraham? Christ is both the Son of God and the son of Abraham. Because we are now in Christ, we are sons of God on the one hand and sons of Abraham on the other hand. How can we be sons of God? Because we are in Christ, who is the Son of God. How can we be sons of Abraham? Also because we are in Christ, who is the son of Abraham. (Life-study of Galatians, p. 176)

Today's Reading

It is a matter of tremendous significance for the divine life to be imparted into us. This impartation of the divine life causes an organic union which makes us both the sons of God and the sons of Abraham. This organic union takes place exclusively in Christ. In Christ we enjoy the wonderful organic union with the Triune God. In this union we are, on the one hand, the sons of God and, on the other hand, the sons of Abraham. Christ is the unique sphere in which this all takes place. When we enter into this sphere, we become sons of God and sons of Abraham. Our true status is that in Christ and by the organic union we are both sons of God and sons of Abraham.

Although we all have a natural life with a natural ancestry, we need not live any longer according to that life. Instead, we may live by the divine life with the divine nature. By living according to this life, we are in reality the sons of God and the sons of Abraham. We have been baptized into Christ, the unique seed who has fulfilled God's promise to Abraham. We and Christ have been joined in a marvelous organic union. Because of this union, we are sons of God and sons of Abraham. Here in this organic union we inherit the promise which has been fulfilled by Christ. Actually, Christ Himself is this inheritance. The promise we inherit is the promise we now enjoy. (Life-study of Galatians, pp. 176-177)

The seed needed for the fulfillment of God's purpose could not be anything Abraham already possessed (Eliezer—Gen. 15:2) or could produce out of himself (Ishmael—16:15). Only that which God worked into Abraham could bring forth from Abraham the required seed. Likewise, only what God works into us through His grace can bring forth Christ as the seed to fulfill God's purpose. (Gen. 15:4, footnote 1)

The seed that was needed for the fulfillment of God's purpose had to be what God promised to work out through Abraham. It had to be something that God worked into him so that he might bring it forth (Gen. 15:4-5)....If you pray and read Genesis 15 and Galatians 3, you will see that the seed is Christ Himself.

In order to fulfill God's purpose we must have Christ wrought into us. This is why Paul told us that Christ was revealed into him (Gal. 1:15-16), that Christ lived in him (Gal. 2:20), that Christ was formed in him (Gal. 4:19), and that for him to live was Christ (Phil. 1:21). Paul lived Christ. When he was Saul of Tarsus, he passed through a Jewish Damascus, gaining many things. All that he acquired during that time was just an Eliezer. The Lord told Paul that he had to forget all of those things—they were dung, garbage, dog food—and to cast them aside. None of the things that Paul had could bring forth Christ. Only that which God worked into his being could bring forth Christ. The Lord seemed to tell Paul, "The things that you had from your religious background can never bring forth Christ. Only what I am working into you will bring forth Christ. What I am working into you is My grace." Eventually, Paul could say, "By the grace of God I am what I am; and His grace unto me did not turn out to be in vain, but, on the contrary, I labored more abundantly than all of them, yet not I but the grace of God which is with me" (1 Cor. 15:10). (Life-study of Genesis, pp. 596-597)

Further Reading: Life-study of Galatians, msg. 20; Life-study of Genesis, msg. 44

Morning Nourishment

Gen. 15:6 "And he believed Jehovah, and He accounted it to him as righteousness."

Rom. 4:2-3 "For if Abraham was justified out of works, he has something to boast in, but not before God. For what does the Scripture say? "And Abraham believed God, and it was accounted to him as righteousness.""

Believing God was Abraham's spontaneous reaction to God's repeated appearing to him. God appeared to Abraham a number of times (Gen. 12:1-3, 7; 13:14-17; 15:1-7; ch. 18; Acts 7:2), each time transfusing something of His glory, something of Himself, into Abraham. Hence, Abraham's believing was actually the springing up within him of the very element that God had transfused into him. God's reaction to Abraham's believing was to justify him, that is, to account him righteous. This accounting was not out of works but was based on his believing God. (Rom. 4:3, footnote 1)

Today's Reading

[In Genesis 15:6] Abraham did not believe God to obtain outward blessings for his own existence; he believed that God was able to work something into him to bring forth a seed out of his own being for the fulfillment of God's purpose. This kind of faith is precious to God and is accounted by Him as righteousness. Abraham was justified by such a faith (Rom. 4:1-5 and footnote 1 of v. 1). (Gen. 15:6, footnote 1)

[Genesis 15:6] is the first time the Bible speaks of faith. Abraham is the father of faith. He believed God's word in a definite way, and God counted it to him for righteousness.

God told Abraham, "He who will come out from your own body shall be your heir" [v. 4]. This shows us that God's goal is not achieved through the many people He has gathered, but through those whom He has begotten. Those who are not begotten of God do not count; they cannot fulfill God's purpose. God's eternal purpose is fulfilled through those whom He has begotten.

God asked Abraham if he could count the stars in heaven and told him that his descendants would be as numerous as the stars. Abraham believed in God, and God counted it to him for righteousness. As we have mentioned previously, God first had to work on one person and gain something in him before He could gain something through many others. In order for God to have many believers, He first had to gain one believer. Abraham believed in God, and God counted it to him for righteousness. (CWWN, vol. 35, "The God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob," p. 47)

God's justification is not a reward (wages) for our good works (labor); it is grace freely given to us through Christ's redemption. If God's justification were based on our good works, or if it required our good works, then it would be the wages we earn for our good works; that is, it would be something owed to us, not something freely given by God. Since God's justification is reckoned according to His grace, it is no longer out of works; otherwise, grace is no longer grace (Rom. 11:6). Our works can by no means replace God's grace; God's grace must be absolute. (Rom. 4:4, footnote 2)

Through our fellowship, I hope we can realize that in God's eyes and in God's heart, Abraham was a special person.

God...promised Abraham that his heavenly seed in their divine nature would be as many as the stars in heaven who could never be touched by anyone on earth. Abraham believed in Jehovah, and Jehovah reckoned this believing to him for righteousness (Gen. 15:5-6). In Romans 4 Paul considered this as the example of justification. God is the shield, God is the great reward, and God is also the Justifier. God's justifying of Abraham meant that God became happy with Abraham and that Abraham was altogether in harmony with God. He was altogether acceptable to God, having no problem with God. (The History of God in His Union with Man, pp. 96-97)

Further Reading: CWWN, vol. 35, "The God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob," ch. 4; Life-study of Romans, msgs. 5-6

Morning Nourishment

Rom. 4:13 "For it was not through the law that the promise was made to Abraham or to his seed that he would be the heir of the world, but through the righteousness of faith."

12:5 "So we who are many are one Body in Christ, and individually members one of another."

There is no mention of sin in Genesis 15. God told Abraham, "Look at the heavens and count the stars. Your seed will be like the stars in the sky" [cf. v. 5]. Abraham believed, and his faith was counted by God as righteousness. God's justification of Abraham was unrelated to sin. It was totally involved with God's purpose, with having a seed to produce a kingdom for the fulfillment of God's purpose. This is why the apostle Paul in Romans 4, after referring to Genesis 15 where Abraham's faith was reckoned as righteousness, mentions the promise given to Abraham and his seed of inheriting the world (Rom. 4:13). What does inheriting the world have to do with justification? Why does Paul mention this in chapter 4? Abraham and his heirs must inherit the world for the sake of God's kingdom, and God's kingdom is for His purpose. (Life-study of Romans, p. 83)

Today's Reading

Abraham was not justified by faith in Genesis 14 when he believed that God was the Most High God, the Possessor of heaven and earth. God did not count that kind of faith to him as righteousness....It was the faith that believed that God was able to work something into him to bring forth the seed. Believing that God will supply our daily needs, our daily food, is good, but it is not the kind of faith that is precious in the eyes of God. What kind of faith is precious in God's sight? The faith that believes that He is able to work Himself into us to bring forth Christ. Most Christians today only care for the faith that believes that God can do outward things for them. That kind of faith believes that God is able to give them health, healing, a good job, or a promotion. Many Christians only have that kind of faith. Although that kind of faith is good, it is not the faith that is so dear and precious in the eyes of God. He did not count that kind of faith as righteousness to Abraham. The kind of faith that was counted as righteousness to Abraham was the faith that God was able to work something into him to bring forth a seed. In Genesis 15 Abraham did not believe that God would give him bread and butter, cattle, or more servants. He believed that God was able to work something into him and bring forth a seed. (Life-study of Genesis, p. 593)

Romans 4 tells us that God's justification is not for going to heaven or merely for our salvation. Justification enables Abraham and all his believing heirs to inherit the world and to exercise the dominion of God on this earth as mentioned in Genesis 1. If we only had Romans 3, we would say that God's justification, based upon Christ's redemption, is for our salvation. Chapter 4, however, clearly unveils that God's justification of His chosen ones is not merely for their salvation; it is purposely for them to inherit the world that they may exercise God's dominion on the earth.

Paul wrote Romans 4 because he wanted to show that God's justification is for the fulfillment of His purpose. God's purpose is to have the one Body, which is the kingdom, to express Him and to exercise His dominion on the earth.

The purpose of God's justification is to have a reproduction of Christ in millions of saints. These saints, as the reproduction of Christ, become the members of His Body (Rom. 12:5). This Body then becomes the kingdom of God on earth (Rom. 14:17) for the fulfillment of God's purpose. The Body as the kingdom of God is expounded in Romans 12–16. All the local churches are expressions of the Body of Christ as the kingdom of God. The church as the kingdom of God is not composed of one Isaac, but of many Isaacs who have proceeded out of God's justification. All of these are the issue of the subjective and deeper experience of justification. (Life-study of Romans, pp. 84, 87, 98)

Further Reading: Life-study of Romans, msgs. 7-8

Hymns, #191

1

Lord, Thou art the “Seed of woman,”
Born to bruise the enemy;
Thou didst take the human nature,
Die to win the victory.
As the very God incarnate,
Flesh and blood Thou didst partake;
Thou thru death hast crushed the devil
And his pow'r of death didst break.

2

“Seed of Abraham,” Thou art, Lord,
By God's promise Thou hast come,
That the blessing He hath promised
On all people thus might come.
Abraham Thou hast preceded,
For Thou art the great “I AM,”
Yet Thou cam'st to be his offspring
And become God's promised “Lamb.”

3

Lord, Thou art the “Seed of David,”
For the kingdom Thou wast raised;
For God's glory and His building
On the throne Thou hast been placed.
Truly Thou art “David's offspring,”
Yet “my Lord” he calleth Thee,
For Thou art his “root” and fountain,
“Lord of all” eternally.

4

Though “a child” born with our nature,
Thou the “Mighty God” art called;
Thou, “a son” to us art given,
“Everlasting Father” called.
All the blessings God hath promised,
With our faith on Thee depend;
Thou art “Yea” and “Amen” for them,
All the content and the end!