



water from rock

Selah: Stop, Look, Listen – April 6, 2023

The Lord be with you.

Have you seen that beautiful Passover moon looking down on us the past few nights? What that Passover Moon is telling us is that this is Holy Week. We are in those wondrous and holy days in which we follow our Lord Jesus from His triumphal entry, through the agony of the cross, to the glory of His resurrection. And I don't want to let these days just slip by us without stopping to think about the meaning of our Lord's passion, his suffering and death, and his resurrection. So for today, I want to look at the Apostle Paul's letter to the Romans in Chapter Four, as Paul is pointing us to Abraham to show how we are put right with God. And what Paul is showing in Romans 4 is that if Abraham was put right with God, if he was justified not by works of the law, but by faith in God, so you and I are justified. We are put right with God by faith in God as we trust Him, as we give him our allegiance.

Okay, so that takes us then to the end of Romans 4, at verse 22, where Paul says, "Therefore, Abraham's faith was reckoned to him as a righteousness." Now the words, "it was reckoned to him" were written not for his sake alone, but for ours also. It will be reckoned to us who believe in him, who raised Jesus our Lord from the dead, who was handed over to death for our trespasses and was raised for our justification. Now, it's this last verse, verse 25 that I wanna focus on today. Where Paul says, "Jesus was handed over to death for our trespasses. And was raised for our justification." And as I think about it, that's a pretty good statement of the gospel, that Jesus was handed over to death for our trespasses and was raised for our justification, and it tells us something about the meaning of Good Friday and Easter Sunday, that Jesus was handed over to death for our trespasses and was raised for our justification. Now, it is important for our understanding of this verse to be sure about one little word here, and that is the Greek word dia, that is D-I-A, as Paul says that Jesus was handed over to death, dia, our trespasses, and was raised, dia our justification. The Greek word, dia, it can be translated as for as it is here, but it can also be translated as because of or on a count of and that really is a sense of the word dia here that Paul is saying that Jesus Was handed over to death dia, on a count, of because of our trespass, and Jesus was raised dia on account of, because of our justification.

Now, some of us can remember the day when the FBI used to place the most wanted posters in the post office. And that was where people who were wanted for certain crimes, where their names and pictures were posted, and in saying that someone was say wanted for mail fraud. The FBI is not advertising, they're not looking for someone to go out and to commit mail fraud, rather



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to say someone is wanted for mail fraud is to say that someone is wanted on account of, because of mail fraud. So that is the sense of the word dia here, that Jesus Was handed over to death for, yes, or on a count of because of our trespasses, that's why Jesus died, and Jesus was raised for or on a counter because of our justification, because of our having been put right with God. So, follow what Paul is saying here, about Christ's resurrection. It is the proof. It is God's assurance that we have been put right with him, justified through the cross of Jesus Christ. As Jesus was put to death on account of our trespasses, and Jesus was raised on account of our justification. So, you see the resurrection, the empty tomb is proof. It is evidence that what Jesus accomplished on the cross is accepted by the Father as we are put right with God.

We might think of the resurrection as God saying Amen to Jesus words, it is finished. Yes, Jesus saving work on the cross was finished. He was handed over on a count of, because of our trespasses, and he was raised on a count of, because of our justification. Christ's resurrection on Easter Sunday is God's assurance that we never need be in doubt about His forgiveness of our sins. So that if one sin of ours, just one sin of ours was not atoned for, was not taken away by Christ's death then Jesus would still be in the grave. The Resurrection is the proof that what Jesus did on the cross for us, that it is approved and accepted by the Father, so that we might be saved, so that we might be put right with God. The empty tomb proves that. Here's how Paul puts it in 1 Corinthians Chapter 15:17, where he says, "If Christ has not been raised, your faith is futile. You're still in your sins." But of course, Christ has been raised. So, our sins are gone, they are removed as far as the east is from the west.

So this Friday, we stop to worship, we stop to be in awe that Jesus died on a count of our trespasses and on Easter Sunday, we worship that by Christ's resurrection, we have God's guarantee that we are put right with Him through the cross.

Christ, we do all adore thee and we do praise thee forever. For on the Holy Cross as though the world from sin redeemed Christ. We do all adore thee. And we do praise thee forever.

I am Tim Smith, the fellow traveler. Thanks for listening until next time.