

# Philippians Series

Lesson #072

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Dean Bible Ministries

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# Example of Justification

## Philippians 3:8–11; Romans 4:1–4



**“[the] doctrine of justification is this, that we are pronounced righteous and are saved solely by faith in Christ, and without works.”**

**~Martin Luther  
*Commentary on  
Galatians***





**“He is said to be justified in God’s sight who is both reckoned righteous in God’s judgment and has been accepted on account of his righteousness ... it consists in the remission of sins and the imputation of Christ’s righteousness.”**

**~John Calvin, *The Institutes of the Christian Religion***

**“yet God, without any merit of my own, out of mere grace, imputes to me the perfect satisfaction, righteousness, and holiness of Christ. ... if only I accept this gift with a believing heart.”**

**~The Heidelberg Catechism, 1563**

## **Righteousness**

**The *standard* of God's own character. God is righteous.**

## **Justice**

**The *application* of God's standard to His creatures.**

## **Love**

**The expression of God's integrity to His creatures.**

**Rom. 4:1, “What then shall we say that Abraham our father has found according to the flesh?”**

**Rom. 4:2, “For if Abraham was justified by works, he has something to boast about, but not before God.”**

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**δικαίωω *dikaioō***

**aor pass indic 3 sing**

**to pronounce righteous,  
justify**

**Isaiah 64:6,**

**“For all of us have become like one who is unclean,  
And all our righteous deeds are like a filthy garment;”**

**צְדָקָה (*ṣ<sup>e</sup>dāqâ*), *righteousness, justice***

**Rom. 4:3, “For what does the Scripture say? ‘*Abraham believed God, and it was accounted to him for righteousness.*’ ”**

**πιστεύω *pisteuō*  
aor act indic 3 sing  
to believe, trust**

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3 sing aor pass indic  
to pronounce righteous, justify**

**צְדָקָה *tzedaqah*  
comm fem sing abs  
righteousness, justice**

# Imputation: Credits and Debits

## Definition:

**λογίζομαι (*logizomai*), reckon, think, credit;**

**Primarily a mathematical and accounting term, then of cognitive processes.**

**① to determine by mathematical process, *reckon, calculate*, frequently in a transf. Sense.**

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### **Definition:**

**חָשַׁב (*ḥāshab*) think, plan, make a judgment, imagine, count, compute, calculate, value, regard, think, plan, invent;**

**accounting use of *ḥāshab* in the Semitic languages and in English is attested in Hebrew for the pi. “to account, calculate” (Lev. 25:27, 50, 52; 27:18, 23; 2 Kings 12:16) and the ni. “to be audited” (2 Kings 22:7)**

## **Structure of Genesis 15**

**15:1–5: God's declaration of His promises to Abram.**

**15:6: Parenthetical reminder: Abram's possession of imputed Righteousness is the basis for the promise.**

**15:7–21: God's covenantal binding of Himself to His promises.**

## **Structure of Genesis 15**

**15:1–5**

**God: 15:1 God declares His protection and reward.**

**Abram: 15:2, 3 Expresses his concern for an heir and his own plan**

**God: 15:4, 5 Reiterates that Abram's own son would be his heir and his descendants like the stars.**

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**Abram: 15:2, 3** Expresses his concern for an heir and his own plan.

**God: 15:4, 5** Reiterates that Abram's own son would be his heir and his descendants like the stars.

### **Parenthetical Reminder**

**Gen. 15:6** Abram had already believed and was imputed righteousness, this is the basis for the blessing.

## Structure of Genesis 15

**15:7–21**

<b>God</b>	<b>Gen. 15:7</b>	<b>God grounds the promise in Himself</b>
<b>Abram</b>	<b>Gen. 15:8</b>	<b>Abram requests confirmation</b>
<b>God</b>	<b>Gen. 15:9</b>	<b>God instructs Abram to prepare for the sacrifice</b>
<b>Abram</b>	<b>Gen. 15:10</b>	<b>Abram obeys</b>
<b>Abram</b>	<b>Gen. 15:11– Gen. 15:12</b>	<b>Abram is assaulted by birds of prey, and a deep sleep where he is in oppressive darkness</b>
<b>God</b>	<b>Gen. 15:13</b>	<b>God affirms the promise though He warns that Abram's descendants will be enslaved and oppressed for 400 years</b>

**13** They will be oppressed for 400 years

**14** God will judge the nation and they will leave with numerous possessions

**15** Abram will die in peace in old age

**16** The fourth generation will return

**God unilaterally cuts the covenant**

**17** a smoking oven and a flaming torch pass between the pieces of the sacrifice

**18–21** To your seed I have given the land from the river of Egypt to the river Euphrates, including dominance over all the people listed

**Gen. 15:1, “After these things the word of the LORD came to Abram in a vision, saying, ‘Do not be afraid, Abram. I am your shield, your exceedingly great reward.’”**

**Gen. 15:2, “But Abram said, ‘Lord GOD, what will You give me, seeing I go childless, and the heir of my house is Eliezer of Damascus?’”**

**Gen. 15:3, “Then Abram said, ‘Look, You have given me no offspring; indeed one born in my house is my heir!’ ”**

**Genesis 15:4, “And behold, the word of the Lord came to him, saying, ‘This one shall not be your heir, but one who will come from your own body shall be your heir.’”**

**Genesis 15:5, “Then He brought him outside and said, ‘Look now toward heaven, and count the stars if you are able to number them.’ And He said to him, ‘So shall your descendants be.’”**

**Is this a salvific promise?**

**Genesis 15:6, “And he believed in the Lord, and He accounted it to him for righteousness.”**

**Gen. 15:6, “And he believed in the Lord, and He accounted it, righteousness, to him.”**

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הֶאֱמַן *he'emin*

hif perf 3 masc sing

**to trust**

**Genesis 15:6, “And he believed in the Lord, and He accounted it to him for righteousness.”**

**Genesis 15:6, “And because he put his trust in the Lord, He reckoned it to his merit.” [*Tanakh*]**

**Genesis 15:6, “And he believed in the Lord; and He counted it to him for righteousness.” [*JPS 1917*]**

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**“The syntax ... suggests that this is a comment [by the author, Moses] within the narrative and is not to be understood as an event within the framework of the other events of the narrative.”**

**~John Sailhammer, *Genesis***

**Recognition of Abram's faith at this point in the story, however, should not be taken as the initiation of his faith. Abram had already responded earlier to the call and promise of God's word (12:1–3). Just as the covenant ritual of chap. 15 does not initiate God's commitment but formally ratifies it, so the narration's affirmation of Abram's faith in v. 6 declares the faith Abram had exercised from the outset. [Emphasis added]**

**~John Sailhammer, *Genesis***

## **Believed**

**אָמַן (ʿāman) to confirm, support, uphold (Qal); to be established, be faithful (Niphal); to be certain, i.e. to believe in (Hiphil). [1]**

**[1] R. Laird Harris, Robert Laird Harris, Gleason Leonard Archer and Bruce K. Waltke, *Theological Wordbook of the Old Testament*, electronic ed. (Chicago: Moody Press, 1999), 51.**

**1. The root meaning of the Hebrew concept is the idea of stability or certainty.**

**2 Kings 18:16, “At that time Hezekiah cut off the gold from the doors of the temple of the Lord, and from the doorposts which Hezekiah king of Judah had overlaid, and gave it to the king of Assyria.” [the foundational support of the pillars]**

**אֲמָנָה *'omnah* Noun comm fem plur abs doorpost**

**root is *aleph mem nun,***

***'amn***

***Amen is a word used in support of what is said by someone else.***

**2. TWOT: In the Hiphil (causative), it basically means “to cause to be certain, sure” or “to be certain about,” “to be assured.” In this sense the word in the Hiphil conjugation is the biblical word for “to believe” and shows that biblical faith is an assurance, a certainty, in contrast with modern concepts of faith as something possible, hopefully true, but not certain.[1]**

**[1] R. Laird Harris, Robert Laird Harris, Gleason Leonard Archer and Bruce K. Waltke, *Theological Wordbook of the Old Testament*, electronic ed. (Chicago: Moody Press, 1999), 51.**

**3. Hebrews 11:1, “Now faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen.”**

**4. Faith or Belief means that one is assured that something is true.**

**5. Faith is knowledge, and is not opposed to knowledge.  
But it is not a knowledge that is restricted to only  
empirical or rational justification.**

**Faith is belief that an authority is communicating  
something true.**

**6. The operation of faith is always expressed propositionally.**

**I believe  $x$  where  $x$  stands for something that is verifiable or falsifiable.**

**7. To believe means to affirm or agree that something is true.**

**The verb here is Hiphel, 3cs. The “he” is a reference to Abraham, the only other person in the conversation.**

**Ex. 4:30, “And Aaron spoke all the words which the LORD had spoken to Moses. Then he did the signs in the sight of the people.**

**Ex. 4:31, “So the people believed; and when they heard that the LORD had visited the children of Israel and that He had looked on their affliction, then they bowed their heads and worshiped.”**

**Ex. 14:30, “So the LORD saved Israel that day out of the hand of the Egyptians, and Israel saw the Egyptians dead on the seashore.**

**Ex. 14:31, “Thus Israel saw the great work which the LORD had done in Egypt; so the people feared the LORD, and believed the LORD and His servant Moses.”**

## 8. When did Abram believe.

**15:2, 3, 5 all begin in Hebrew with a conjunction [and] called the *vav* consecutive, the conjunction plus the imperfect tense of the verb.**

**BUT in 15:6 there is a break, with a *vav* and a perfect tense verb, this is not consecutive action (this happened, then this, then this ...)**

**The break in the verb tense indicates something inserted that is not part of the action.**

**The verbal construction “believed” (v. 6) and reference to a past event at Ur (v. 7) substantiate that Abram already exhibited faith. The syntax of the verb *wěhe’ěmin* diverts from the typical pattern found in past tense narrative. *The force of the construction conveys an ongoing faith repeated from the past. The author is editorializing on the events reported, not including Abram’s faith in the chain of events as a consequence of the theophanic message.* The point of the author is that Abram continued to believe in the Lord. In addition, reference to the Lord’s appearance to Abram at Ur (v. 7) implies an antecedent relationship (cp. Acts 7:2–4).**

**~Mathews, K.A. *Genesis 11:27–50:26*, Vol. 1B**

**Genesis 15:6, “And he believed in the Lord, and He accounted it to him for righteousness.”**

**Genesis 15:6, “And because he put his trust in the Lord, He reckoned it to his merit.” [*Tanakh*]**

**Genesis 15:6, “And he believed in the Lord; and He counted it to him for righteousness.” [*JPS 1917*]**

**הֶאֱמִין *he'emin***

**hif perf 3 masc sing  
to trust**

**חָשַׁב *chashav***

**qal wawConsec 3 masc sing  
to think, account, credit, reason**

**2 Sam. 19:19, “Then he said to the king, ‘Do not let my lord impute iniquity to me, or remember what wrong your servant did on the day that my lord the king left Jerusalem, that the king should take it to heart.’ ”**

**Psa. 32:2, “Blessed is the man to whom the LORD does not impute iniquity, and in whose spirit there is no deceit.”**

**Exodus 2:6, ‘she saw *him*, the child’ [emphasis added];**

**Leviticus 13:57, ‘thou shalt burn *it*, that which has in it the plague’ [emphasis added];**

**1 Kings, 19:21, ‘he boiled *them*, the flesh’ [emphasis added].**

***He imputed it, the righteousness.***

**Genesis 15:6, “And he believed in the Lord, and He accounted it [feminine pronoun], righteousness [feminine noun], to him.”**

**Genesis 15:6, “And he believed in the Lord, and He accounted it to him for righteousness.”**

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צְדָקָה *tzedaka*

comm fem sing  
righteousness

**“The Lord is righteous (צַדִּיק, *tzaddiq*) in all his ways and holy in all his works” (Psa. 145:17).**

**The precise meanings of the terms in the word group שֶׁ-ד-ק (“to be righteous, just”) is disputed since they have a broad range of nuances; generally, the word group is associated with behavior that conforms to a standard, hence “right standing” (שְׁדָאָה; e.g., Gen. 38:26), or the adjudication of behavior, that is, to declare righteous (*hişdîq*; e.g., Deut. 25:1).**

**~Robert Duncan Culver, *Systematic Theology***

**Genesis 15:7, “Then He said to him, ‘I am the Lord, who brought you out of Ur of the Chaldeans, to give you this land to inherit it.’ ”**