

26-0405sc - Detailed Summary

26-0405sc - *The Book of Romans*, Steve Cain

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26-0405 - The Book of Romans

Romans 2:17-29 - historical and spiritual background

Summary of Transcript (0:04 - 43:59), Teacher: Steve Cain

(0:04 - 0:27) Prayer Approach Introduction

Okay, I guess it's time for us to get started ourselves. Having read through Romans umpteen times, Steve has come up with an approach to prayer that he thinks the class will find interesting too. It is a modification of how he starts his prayers.

(0:28 - 2:26) Opening Prayer and Romans Overview

Steve begins the prayer: Most gracious Heavenly Father, thank you for blessing us with your grace and mercy. We thank you for the opportunity we have to come to you through Jesus, whom you provided us with to be our priest, who functions as our priest. He's presenting a sacrifice to you for our sins. He's providing us with the righteousness that we need to approach him. And we're very grateful for you blessing us with that grace and mercy. We come to you at this time asking that you be with us and that you will bless us with the understanding and insight that we need, and to be able to comprehend your Word, and to be able to put application into our lives and to understand what Paul is trying to get across to us. We pray these things in Jesus Christ's name. Amen.

We're looking at Romans, the third chapter. We delved a little bit into it last week, and I'd like to take a look at it and see what we can do with it. Start from the beginning again. And it's still crucial. There's two things that I find very crucial, and I know that you appreciate this too. And that is that we have to really believe a God. We need to believe that he is, and that he is a rewarder of those who diligently seek him. We fall in that category. We are diligently seeking him.

(2:27 - 8:51) Belief in God's Providence and Jewish History

And we have to recognize the fact that his role in our lives is complete. He does divinely intervene in our lives providentially, and we pray that we recognize that role in our lives. And so therefore, we need to be trusting in him in every aspect of our lives. Steve mentions the habit of reading five psalms and one proverb every day, which gets you through it. The psalmist definitely believes in the divine intervention and providence of God. He definitely believes that God exists and God has complete control over his life.

As we reflect upon what Paul's writing about, we need to know the history of the Jews in particular, because this is what he's approaching here in talking about circumcision and so on, and realizing that God played a complete role in the providence of Israel, and that they need to believe in the God that Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob believed in, and they're completely accept that over idolatry and the other things that are going on in the world. So he's talking to the Israelites, or the Christian Jews, and I believe he's addressing the Christian Jews, those who are Christians with Jewish background, that they are so proud, and that their heritage is such that they believe that everybody else ought to be conforming to their understanding of what life ought to be. And so they're being very critical of the Gentile, the person, the Gentile who became a Christian, because the Gentile who became a Christian does not have the background that the Israelites have.

And so their heritage is such that, as pointed out in Psalms 147, that the very last part of it, where the psalmist points out the fact that God treated Israel, the nation of Israel, far differently, and blessed them with His instructions and His presence that He did not do with the rest of the world. And we need to recognize that, because when God brought the Israelites out of Egypt, He came to them on Mount Sinai, and what did He offer them? He made a proposition to them. You remember what that proposition was? He says to them, I want to be your God if you'll be my people. And I think that's very important, because He's saying to this specific group of people, He's not making an offer to the rest of the world, He's saying just to this specific group of people, I want to be your God if you'll be my people. He's excluding the rest of the world, and He's letting them continue in their ignorance, He's letting them continue to grope about trying to figure out how to worship Him, and of course they're not looking to Him, they're looking at superstition, circumstances, they're looking at idolatry, and various other things to answer the questions they have about life, and especially about superior being, God, because it is within man that he has to believe there is a God. And of course that's what atheists says, that's a weakness. You don't need God, you are God, you are your own master of your own faith. But we know better, and so we see that God made a promise to them, I will bless those who bless you, and I will curse those who curse you, and I want you to recognize me as God. So what did they do? They recognized the opportunity, and they said, how can we lose? We'll do it. And so they made a pledge to God that they would be, that He would be their God, and they would be His people.

So what's the very first thing that happens after they leave Mount Sinai? God is starting to take them to the promised land. What happens? They turn, the hardship comes in, and when hardship comes in, what do you do? You look to a God, or you look to something that you hope will bring peace and comfort to you, that's the reason why you turn to superstition, that's the reason why you turn to idolatry.

(8:56 - 11:01) Hardship, Idolatry, and Mixed Heritage

Yeah, the old ways seemed to be working, and they had become used to the worship that the Egyptians were doing, and quite a few people, the group of people that God is making that promise to, are not 100% Israelites. They're not 100% Israelites. Some of that population are Egyptians who are hanging on to their coattails, and so the Egyptians want to recognize and be blessed in the same way that the Israelites are being blessed. So when the Israelites left Egypt, many Egyptians went with them. And so that's one of the reasons why they said, why are you bringing us out of Egypt? Was there not enough graves there? And then when they get into the hardships and out into the wilderness, they start worshiping their old gods, like you said. The old ways seem to be working, and of course we have a tendency, I don't know about you, but I have a tendency to play both ends

against the middle. God, idolatry, good luck. And that seems to be the way it goes.

So we see that the Christians who have the Jewish background are dealing with heritage and tradition, and so they have to be able to separate those things, and to be able to bring themselves to accept a group of people who don't have the same background.

(11:04 - 15:54) Jewish Pride vs. Gentile Converts in Rome

Because they are worshipers of the true and living God, they think that they have superiority over the Christians who do not have the Jewish background. So Paul's talking about them, and he's saying, remember, we finished up. Let's do this one more time. Let's go to chapter 2 and see where Paul is writing to the church, and I think that he's focusing in on the population there at the church of those who have the Jewish background and hanging on to their heritage. It's not anything different today. I find that when you get into the areas of the United States where the churches of Christ had its start, and you'll see that, oh, my grandfather was a preacher, or I knew Alexander Campbell, or I knew this brother who baptized me, you know, and so I call them bluebloods. I call them bluebloods, and it's very obvious when you get into their presence. They are very prideful about their background of being in the church. You know, aha! Yeah, and so what do they do? They have a tendency to put you down, you know, if they find out that you're from Ohio, especially from Michigan. They have the true church of Michigan? And so that's really the whole crux. Are you a real, real follower of Alexander Campbell, or Stone, or one of the others who helped us? And so they hold on to that, and so their traditions follow them, and it makes it sometimes a little difficult to deal with them, especially if you don't have their background, and you're, you know, what is the church here in this area? A lot of them are displaced Christians from the South, and so they hold on to those traditions. But many of us who are not from the South and do not have that background and are converts from this area, we're either first-century Christians, or we're second-generation Christians. Many of us have never been a third-generation Christian, and so there's a difference.

And so this is what we see, or in my mind, this is what we see going on in Rome, in the church there in Rome. We have people who have the blue bloods, or the traditions that come from the past, their heritage, and they're proud of it. I'm circumcised. What does that mean? I'm a relative or descendant of Jacob, in particular, because Jacob is Israel, and that's where Israel gets their name is from Jacob, because God changed Jacob's name to Israel. And so they're Israelites, or Jacobites, and they're proud of the fact that they worship the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, and so should we. But they have a tradition. Their tradition comes out of a Jewish background.

(15:59 - 17:50) Reading Romans 2 on Jewish Hypocrisy

I lead in, help ending, so let's take a look again at chapter 2 and concluding, and then try to go into chapter 3 and deal with what Paul's really saying in chapter 3, starting with verse 17, chapter 2, and I'm reading from the New International Version. Now you, if you call yourself a Jew, if you rely on the law and boast in God, if you know His will and approve of what is superior because you are instructed by the law, if you are convinced that you are a guide for the blind, a light for those who are in the dark, an instructor of the foolish, a teacher of little children, because you have in the law the embodiment of knowledge and truth, you, then, who teach others, do you not teach yourself? You who preach against stealing, do you steal? You who say that people should not commit adultery, do you commit adultery? You who abhor idols, do you rob temples? You who boast in the law, do you dishonor God by breaking the law? As it is written, God's name is blasphemed among the

Gentiles because of you.

Now he wants them to focus in on their circumcision, their tradition of circumcision. Circumcision has a value if you observe the law, but if you break the law, you have become as though you had not been circumcised. I've never looked at it from that standpoint, have you? That's them. I'm saying that for them. Once again, circumcision has value if you observe the law, but if you break the law, you have become as though you had not been circumcised.

(17:51 - 22:22) True Circumcision and Transition to Chapter 3

So then, if those who are not circumcised keep the law's requirements, will they not be regarded as though they were circumcised? The one who is not circumcised physically and yet obeys the law will condemn you who, even though you have the written code and circumcision, are a lawbreaker. A person is not a Jew who is one outwardly, only outwardly, nor is circumcision merely outward and physical. No, a person is a Jew who is one inwardly, and circumcision is circumcision of the heart by the Spirit, not by the written code. Such a person's praise is not from other people, but from God.

Any comments or any thoughts about what we just got through reading? So that's going to lead us into chapter 3, because he hasn't changed his focus. His focus is on the Christian who has a Jewish background, and they're so prideful about the fact that they're circumcised, and they can come back and say, I am a worshiper of the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, and I have that background, and I'm proud of it. He's talking about the fact that, and he's going to refer to Abraham, and he's going to ask the question about where did circumcision come in in the first place? Well, what's the purpose of circumcision? Why did God initiate circumcision? And so Paul wants us to realize that circumcision has nothing to do with, in this particular case, with whether they're righteous or not. Circumcision, in this case, has everything to do as to whether or not they can take their genealogy all the way back to Abraham.

So who practices circumcision? Do the Islamics practice circumcision? I think they do. Because Ishmael was circumcised, wasn't he? For what reason? How about the rest of the people that were employed by Abraham? He had to circumcise them too, didn't he? And he had to circumcise anybody that became a resident or a citizen of his community. He had to circumcise them. So circumcision had really nothing to do with, in their particular case, whether or not they testified that they were believers of God or not, but circumcision of Abraham had a specific purpose, didn't it? Paul wants us to know what that specific purpose was, because when we look at Abraham in particular, he was just a regular Jehovah in the community. He was a worshiper, perhaps, of the idol or the goddess of that temple. And so apparently, you know, God wanted to pick him out, and he knew he was of the right disposition and the right mentality that he would recognize God for being God. So when God came to him and said, I will bless you if you will follow me and go where I lead you and be with me. He said, I will make of you a great nation. I will bless your seed, and through your seed, I will bless the world. And there was one other promise.

(22:22 - 25:44) Abraham's Faith Journey and Trust

There was a land promise, a nation promise, and a seed promise. And God made that promise to him. Somehow, somehow, it's beyond my imagination, Abraham recognized that this was God, not an idol, not what everybody else was worshiping. This was really God. And this God is making an offer to me that I can't turn down. And so he takes his wife Sarah and so on.

And so we see that God then has to bring Abraham to the full point where he is completely, 100% trusting in God. Now, when do we see that transition happening? And he offers Isaac as a sacrifice on the altar. He starts to offer Isaac as a sacrifice on the altar. God changes his heart. But in the meantime, that travel to that, as somebody says, when they look at his tombstone from 1941 to 2026, there's a little dash. That dash means there's something that happened between there and here.

So what happened from there to here in Abraham's life? He had to learn to completely trust in God. But he didn't completely trust in God at first. And God was true. And God protected Abraham. And God looked after Abraham just like he said he would. And so we see that with all of that, God is earning his trust. God earns yours and my trust. And he's wanting us to get to the point in our lives where we will completely trust him just as Abraham did.

And that's one of the things we have about Hebrews, the 11th chapter, because what did we call the 11th chapter of Hebrews? The Hall of Faith. Because there, the Hebrew writer lists many, many, many people about who had enough faith to endure the trials and tribulations that were in their lives. And they believed in God. And so that's the reason why we want to say, we believe in the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, because God showed himself true through Isaac and Jacob. And he earned their faith, especially Jacob's.

(25:45 - 26:26) Jacob's Conditional Promise to God

I love the story of Jacob when you see how he's going off, running away from Esau. And he has an encounter with God. And what does he tell God when he's out there and he sees this vision of angels ascending and descending from the ladder? And God makes a proposition to him that he made to Abraham, Isaac, and his forefather. What was it? Jacob says to him, I will worship you if you will get me back to my family, safe and sound. If you don't recognize that, read the account, because that's exactly what he says.

(26:27 - 27:45) God's Faithfulness to Jacob

I will worship you and I will be true to you if you will get me back safely to my family. And so what happens from the time that he leaves his mother and father and goes up to be with his uncle and then comes back? What happens? You read the story. God is faithful—God took him up on his proposition, and God brought him back safely.

And we see that when he encounters Esau, that's when he realizes God got him back. Under what circumstances did Jacob confront his brother Esau? Remember? He's coming back home, he has his family all with him, and he hears that Esau is coming to meet him. He sends everybody ahead of him so that Esau would see that he was going to be by himself or so.

(27:46 - 28:23) Jacob's Wrestling and Lameness

He has a wrestling match. He has a wrestling match. And what happens in that wrestling match? He is produced to be lame, because the angel reaches up and dislocates his hip, and he's lame. There is no way he's going to be able to confront Esau on even terms.

(28:25 - 29:23) Reconciliation with Esau and Recognition of God

He's disabled, and he's hobbling to see his brother and what's the condition. Remember? Esau says, what is the purpose of all this stuff that you send ahead of us? He says, I wanted to get your mindset right for me, and I'm at a living right moment. And Esau says, I've forgiven you for all of that. I'm not going to fight you. And they embrace one another, and they make a proposition or a covenant, and then Jacob goes on back to be with his family. And that's when Jacob recognizes that God is God, and divinely intervenes in his life.

(29:24 - 29:45) Tradition and National Pride

So these are all these things. This is tradition. This is what an Israelite knows, just like we know what went on in the United States. We supposedly know what. Okay. It all depends on which historian you look at listening to. But we know that Americans who know their history are proud. There's no two ways about it. So they have this going for them.

(29:47 - 31:33) Bringing Jews Off Their High Horse

So with all of that said, let's go to chapter three, and we've got a few minutes to get into it. So Paul has tried his level best to bring them off their high horse. They're on a high horse. They're proud. They became Christians because God made a promise to our forefathers, and he fulfilled that promise through Jesus. And we're in that relationship with God now that God promised he would through Abraham's seed. We're the product of that promise, and yes they are. But he wants to get them off their high horse because the Christians who do not have a Jewish background, the Christian who has a Gentile background doesn't have that history, but they are the product of the promise that God made to Abraham.

(31:34 - 34:29) Purpose of Circumcision and Abraham's Righteousness

And stop and think about this now because, oh, I asked the question and I didn't answer it. What was the purpose of circumcision with Abraham? Why did God circumcise Abraham? Paul is going to point that out to us here in the Roman letter. And the purpose is that when God tested Abraham to offer his son Isaac as a sacrifice on an altar, he stopped it, and he recognized Abraham's faith, and that's the faith that we need to have, and that's the faith that he wants us to have. Trust, 100% trust, because the Hebrew writer tells us that Abraham went ahead and was going, and really was going to sacrifice his son Isaac on this altar. Why? Because he had the faith that God would raise him from the dead, because that boy was God's promise to him that through that boy the world would be blessed. So Abraham, knowing full well what Isaac represented and was the future of that promise that God gave to Abraham, if God was going to have him destroy it and stop it, he had to bring him back to life. He believed that. That's what the Hebrew writer tells us in chapter 11. Abraham believed that God would bring him back to life. So he had that faith, 100% complete trust, and God recognized that faith. God recognized that trust. God recognized that Abraham completely, 100%, believed in God. He reckoned him, God reckoned him as being a righteous individual without baptism, without circumcision, nothing. He believed God, and God said, you are righteous.

Now what does that tell us? Abraham was a symbol or a recognition of the fact that this is what God was going to do to the rest of the world, because Israelites were not existing at that time. The only thing that was existing at that time was him and the rest of the world. He was a symbol of the

world. Abraham was a symbol of the world, and that God was going to do the same thing to anybody. Of course, at that time, Gentiles weren't recognized as being Gentiles.

(34:29 - 34:48) Abraham as Symbol for the World

He was a symbol of the world. Abraham was a symbol of the world, and that God was going to do the same thing to anybody.

(34:48 - 38:24) Circumcision as Symbol of Descent

They were either barbaric or whatever. He was going to offer the same thing to the rest of the world, righteousness, and God was going to impute righteousness to those who have the same faith that Abraham had. So God recognized and imputed to him righteousness, and Paul's going to ask, was that before or after circumcision? Well, it was before. Paul answers that question, doesn't he? It was before. God credited Abraham with righteousness before circumcision. So what was the purpose of circumcision? In Paul's writing, the purpose of circumcision was to say to Abraham, I recognize you, and that's a symbol. That circumcision is a symbol that I recognize you as being righteous. And then he says, through your seed, and so in my mind, and I have to say this is Steve's mind, in my mind, the circumcision that followed that was to indicate that they were descendants of Abraham, a way of following the tree. Because just because you were circumcised didn't mean anything other than the fact that you were a relative of Abraham, and that God had made a promise to Abraham that through your seed, the world would be blessed.

So we're going to be indicating that, yes, that person is a descendant of Abraham. Yes, that descendant is, but he had to be specific, didn't he? And Paul points out the fact that we had to be specific, and he points that out in Galatians. And he points out to us in Galatians that as specific as this was, it had to be a descendant of Isaac, not just Abraham, because here's Ishmael, and Ishmael's circumcised just as well as Isaac is circumcised, but so are the other people who are in Abraham's family. They're all circumcised. We want to know specifically what tree, what part of the tree of Abraham are you? So you have to come to him through Isaac, and then you also have to come to him through Jacob. So it's not any good just because you're circumcised. It's not any good just to know that I am a descendant of Abraham. You have to know that you are specifically a descendant of Abraham through Isaac and Jacob. So you have to take your lineage all the way back to Abraham through Jacob and Isaac, and so on.

(38:25 - 41:06) Jesus' Lineage and Its Purpose

So why do we have a lineage given to us about Jesus? And I asked this question last week. Why do we have the knowledge of Jesus' lineage found in Matthew and Luke? To show that it was, that he was from Abraham, and he was from David, and it traces his line. It shows that his lineage is in the right tree, the right limb of the tree of heritage, and that's the reason why it is. And so it takes him back through David, takes him back through Ruth, takes him back to Boaz, all the way back to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. And then the one takes him all the way back to Adam. So the purpose of that is to show that Jesus is, and this is the purpose to show that Jesus is the fulfillment of that prophecy, that he is of the right lineage, and he is able to proclaim himself as being king, and they knew that.

What was the purpose of the book of the lineage that was intact until the destruction of 70 AD? The

purpose was to show who was to be the high priest, who was supposed to be the king, and their land inheritance. So that's the three purposes of keeping track of the heritage, to know who is supposed to be the promised one, who's supposed to be the king, who is supposed to be the high priest, and who is supposed to have property rights. So when Jesus comes in, what happened before his crucifixion? He's riding in on a donkey, isn't he? And they're all saying, hallelujah, hail! And this is Palm Sunday, I imagine. And why are they doing that? Because they recognized him as being from the lineage of David. They recognized his lineage as being a rightful heir of the kingship. So we see that being throughout everything.

(41:08 - 42:08) Modern Analogy and Lineage Recognition

Just the other day, the Shah of Iran, his son is living here in the United States, and when we're bombing Iran, what happens? People were thinking, oh, we're going to overthrow the regime, and we're going to be able to reclaim the regime. And so the son was being interviewed, and apparently he had several people around him, and he gave an announcement. I don't know if you heard this on the news or not, but I did. So after he got through saying what he thought about the change in the regime, everybody that was around there said, hail King Shah! Because they knew that he was an authorized or legitimate claim to the king, of being a king of Iran. They knew that. So Jesus, they knew Jesus' lineage. There's no question about it. And they knew he had to be the result of the promise that God gave to Abraham. They knew that. There's no question about it. So he has the right to be called what? King, prophet, and savior. So he has the right to be called any of those and hold those offices. Prophet, priest, and king. Prophet, priest, and king.

(42:08 - 43:59) Conclusion and Romans 3 Introduction

So I gave you a history lesson instead of chapter 3. Our time is up. Thank you so much for being very patient with me. We'll get into chapter 3, maybe a year from now, but we'll get into chapter 3. So he says, what advantage then is there in being a Jew? Or what value is there in circumcision? Much in every way. And first of all, he says, Jews have been entrusted with the very words of God. No question about it. Thank you so much for your attention. And we'll get, besides that, we'll get into chapter 3 next week.

Steve Class references

Class Overview

Teacher: Steve **Date:** April 5, 2026 **Title:** Romans chapters 2-3

Steve opened the class with a modified personal approach to prayer, then delivered a Bible study focused primarily on Romans 2, with only a brief introduction to Romans 3. The lesson emphasized Jewish pride in heritage and circumcision, the true meaning of being a Jew, Abraham's faith as a model for all, and the importance of complete trust in God. Much of the time was spent providing historical and spiritual background rather than a verse-by-verse exposition of chapter 3.

Opening Prayer and Core Beliefs

Steve led a prayer thanking God for grace and mercy through Jesus Christ, who serves as our priest, presents a sacrifice for our sins, and provides the righteousness we need. He prayed for understanding of Paul's message in Romans and its practical application to life.

Steve stressed two crucial truths (referencing Hebrews 11:6): we must believe that God exists and that He is a rewarder of those who diligently seek Him. Believers fall into this category and must recognize God's complete providential role in their lives, trusting Him fully in every aspect.

Daily Bible Reading Habit and God's Providence

Steve recommended the habit of reading five Psalms and one Proverb daily. He highlighted how the psalmists (especially Psalm 147) consistently affirm God's existence, divine intervention, and sovereign control over life. This mindset is essential when studying Paul's letter to the Romans, particularly regarding the unique history of Israel.

Jewish History, Sinai Covenant, and Idolatry

Steve reviewed Israel's unique relationship with God. At Mount Sinai, God made a specific covenant offer exclusively to the Israelites: "I will be your God if you will be My people" (Exodus 19–20 context). This excluded the rest of the world at that time, leaving Gentiles in spiritual ignorance and idolatry. God also promised, "I will bless those who bless you, and I will curse those who curse you" (Genesis 12:3).

After leaving Sinai, hardships in the wilderness caused many Israelites — along with the mixed multitude that included Egyptians who joined them (Exodus 12:38) — to turn back to Egyptian idolatry and superstition. Steve noted the common human tendency to "play both ends against the middle," hedging between God, idols, and luck.

Addressing Jewish Pride in the Roman Church

Paul primarily addresses Christian Jews in Rome who were proud of their heritage. They looked down on Gentile Christians who lacked Jewish background, traditions, and circumcision. Steve compared this to modern "bluebloods" in Churches of Christ — people who boast of multi-generational involvement, family connections to preachers (e.g., Alexander Campbell or Barton W.

Stone), or Southern church traditions. These individuals often feel superior and can be dismissive toward first- or second-generation converts.

Reading and Explanation of Romans 2:17-29

Steve read Romans 2:17-24 (NIV), confronting the hypocrisy of those who call themselves Jews, rely on the law, boast in God, claim to instruct others (as guides for the blind, lights in darkness, instructors of the foolish), yet break the law themselves through stealing, adultery, and robbing temples. As a result, “God’s name is blasphemed among the Gentiles because of you.”

He continued with Romans 2:25-29 (NIV): Circumcision has value only if one observes the law; breaking the law makes one as though uncircumcised. Conversely, an uncircumcised person who keeps the law’s requirements will be regarded as circumcised and will condemn the law-breaking circumcised Jew.

True Jewish identity is not outward: “A person is not a Jew who is one only outwardly, nor is circumcision merely outward and physical. No, a person is a Jew who is one inwardly; and circumcision is circumcision of the heart, by the Spirit, not by the written code. Such a person’s praise is not from other people, but from God.”

Purpose and Meaning of Circumcision

Steve explained that circumcision did not originally prove personal faith or righteousness. Abraham circumcised Ishmael, his servants, and all males in his household (Genesis 17) as a sign of belonging to his community. Its primary purpose in that context was genealogical — marking physical descendants of Abraham.

Paul’s key point (Romans 4 context anticipated): God credited Abraham with righteousness **before** circumcision, based solely on faith and trust in God’s promises (land, nation, and seed — Genesis 12:1-3, 15, 17). This made Abraham a symbol for the entire world, showing that God would impute righteousness to anyone (Jew or Gentile) who exercises the same faith Abraham had.

Circumcision later served as a visible symbol confirming God’s recognition of Abraham’s righteousness and as a marker to trace the specific lineage through Isaac and Jacob (not Ishmael or other household members). Steve referenced Galatians (Galatians 3:16) to emphasize the need for the precise line of descent.

Abraham’s Faith Development and Hebrews 11

Steve traced Abraham’s journey to 100% trust in God, culminating in the offering of Isaac (Genesis 22). Abraham believed God would raise Isaac from the dead to fulfill the seed promise. Hebrews 11 (the “Hall of Faith”) highlights this and many others who endured trials through similar faith. God reckoned Abraham righteous apart from any ritual (Romans 4:3, Genesis 15:6).

Jacob’s Story as Illustration of Trust

Steve recounted Jacob’s encounter with God at Bethel (Genesis 28), where Jacob made a conditional vow: he would worship God if God brought him back safely to his family. God proved faithful. Later, Jacob wrestled with the angel (Genesis 32), was lamed (hip dislocated), and reconciled with Esau in

a moment of divine intervention and forgiveness. These events taught Jacob that God truly intervenes and is worthy of complete trust.

Jesus' Lineage and Fulfillment of Promise

Steve explained why the genealogies in Matthew 1 and Luke 3 are important: they prove Jesus descended from Abraham through Isaac, Jacob, and David — placing Him in the correct “branch of the tree.” This qualified Him as the promised Seed who would bless the world (Genesis 12:3; Galatians 3:16).

The preserved Jewish genealogies until the destruction of Jerusalem in 70 AD served three main purposes: identifying the rightful king, the high priest, and rightful land inheritors. On Palm Sunday (Matthew 21), the crowds hailed Jesus as the Son of David because they recognized His lineage. Steve drew a modern parallel with the Shah of Iran's son being hailed as king due to legitimate royal lineage. Jesus thus has the right to the offices of Prophet, Priest, and King.

Brief Introduction to Romans 3

Steve noted he spent most of the time on background rather than chapter 3. He briefly introduced Romans 3:1-2 (NIV): “What advantage then is there in being a Jew? Or what value is there in circumcision? Much in every way. First of all, the Jews have been entrusted with the very words of God.”

Conclusion

Steve apologized for giving a “history lesson instead of chapter 3” and promised to continue into Romans 3 the following week.

Overall Theme

The class focused on humbling prideful Jewish-background Christians while reminding all believers that true righteousness and Jewish identity come through inward faith and heart circumcision by the Spirit — modeled perfectly by Abraham and available to both Jews and Gentiles. Outward heritage, circumcision, or family religious pedigree mean nothing without genuine trust in God.