Jewish boasting is excluded, St. Paul purposes to take\*the ground of their own law,  
and demonstrate it from that. He will  
shew that God is not (the God) of Jews  
alone, but of Gentiles, and that *this very  
point was involved in the promise* made  
to Abraham, *by believing which he was  
justified* (ch. iv.), and therefore that it  
lies in the *very root and kernel of the law  
itself*. But, as often elsewhere, he passes  
off from this idea again and again, recurring to it however continually,—and  
eventually when he brings forward his  
proof text (in chap. iv. 17), *Abraham's  
faith*, and *not this fact*, has become the  
leading subject.

**30. seeing that**] literally, **if at least** (if we are to hold to what is  
manifest as a result of our former argument) **God is one, which shall justify the  
circumcision** (literally, the Jews, after the  
analogy of chap. ii. 26) **by** (**out of**, as the  
preliminary condition,—the state *out of  
which* the justification arises) f**aith, and  
the uncircumcision** (the Gentiles) **through**(by means of their) **faith**. Too much  
stress must not be laid on the difference of  
the two prepositions (see ver. 22 and  
note). The former expresses the *ground*  
of justification, generally taken, *by*, or *out  
of faith*: the latter the *means* whereby  
the man lays hold on justification, *by his  
faith*: the former is the objective ground,  
the latter the subjective medium.

**31.**] But again the Jew may object, if this is the  
case, if Faith be the *ground*, and Faith the  
*medium*, of justification for all, circumcised  
or uncircumcised, *surely the law is set aside  
and made void*. That this is not so, the  
Apostle both here asserts, and is prepared

to shew by working out the proposition of  
ver. 29, that the law itself belonged to a  
covenant whose *original recipient was justified by faith*, and whose main promise was, the *reception and blessing of the Gentiles*.

**the law]** i.e. the law of Moses, as every where in the Epistle. We may  
safely say that the Apostle never argues of  
*law*, abstract, in the sense of a system of  
precepts,—its attributes or its effects,—  
but always of THE LAW, concrete,—*the  
law of God given by Moses*, when speaking  
of the Jews, as here: *the law of God*, in  
as far as written in their consciences, when  
speaking of the Gentiles: and when including both, *the law of God generally*,  
His written as well as His unwritten will.—Many Commentators have taken this  
verse (being misled in some eases by its  
place at the end of the chapter) as standing  
by itself, and have gone into the abstract  
grounds why faith, does not make void the  
law (or moral obedience) ; which, however  
true, *have no place here*: the design being  
to shew that the law itself *contained this  
very doctrine*, and was founded in the promise to Abraham on a covenant embracing  
Jews and Gentiles,—and therefore was not  
degraded from its dignity by the doctrine,  
but rather established as a part of God’s  
dealings,—consistent with, explaining, and  
explained by, the Gospel.

**IV. 1–5.**] *Abraham himself was justified by faith*.—The reading and punctuation of this  
verse present some difficulties. Ax to the  
former, I may remark that the verb **hath  
found** is omitted by our oldest MS. authority, and placed variously by others.  
Omitting it, the sentence will stand,  
“*What shall we say then concerning  
Abraham, our father as pertaining to the  
flesh?*” If the verb be retained, the  
punctuation may be, “*What shall we say  
then? that Abraham, our father, as pertaining to the flesh, hath found*” (righteousness, or some advantage over Gentiles) ?  
This has been adopted by Grotius and  
others of some authority. Another mode,  
slightly differing, may be, “*What then?  
shall we say, that*,” &c. But as Tholuck  
well remarks, both these methods of punctuating would presuppose that St. Paul  
had appeared to give some reason in the