

Proverbs 1:29 because they hated knowledge
and did not choose the fear of the Lord.

13. The United States is in the process of moving through the five cycles of discipline outlined in Leviticus 26 (above). Presently she is in the early states of the third cycle: Violence and breakdown of law and order; cities laid waste (Leviticus 26:21–22).

James 2:21 Abraham, the progenitor of our Jewish heritage, was he not vindicated by works when his Law of Freedom consulted wisdom and knowledge from the working objects of the five paragraphs of the Abrahamic Covenant and from that inventory offered up his only son, Isaac, on the altar? Yes, he was.

James 2:22 Do you now comprehend that faith in the Abrahamic Covenant was working simultaneously in coordination with his works on Mount Moriah and out from the source of these works, faith was made complete, mature, perfected; (EXT)

James 2:23 and the Scripture was fulfilled which says, “And Abraham believed God, and it was reckoned to him as righteousness,” and he was called the friend of God? (NASB)

1. James now goes back to where this whole process began, indicated by the phrase, **ἡ γραφή (hē graphḗ)**: “the Scripture.” It is followed by the culminative aorist passive indicative of the verb **πληρώω (plērōō)**: “was fulfilled.”
2. This action is obviously completed and is recorded in the completed canon of Scripture, “which says”: **λέγω (légō)**: To recount; to utter definite words, connected and significant speech equal to discourse; to put forth, propound.”³ What James quotes is:

Genesis 15:6 And he [Abram] had been caused to believe [Hiph‘il causative perfect: in the past with results that last forever] in the Lord; and God kept on crediting [Qal imperfect] it [Abram’s faith in the Lord] to him for righteousness [permanent imputation in time and eternity]. (EXT)

³ Spiros Zodhiates, ed., “λέγω,” in *The Complete Word Study Dictionary: New Testament*, rev. ed. (Chattanooga: AMG Publishers, 1993), 913.

3. In Genesis 15:6, the Hiph'il causative perfect of the verb places the time of the event's occurrence in the past. Abram could not fully comprehend divine guidance, nor could he respond to it by application as an unbeliever.
4. This means that Abram placed his personal faith in Messiah while living in Ur prior to the Lord approached him with Paragraph One of the Abrahamic Covenant.
5. The verse continues with the phrase, "Abraham believed God," the aorist active indicative of the verb πιστεύω (*pisteúō*). This is a constative aorist that contemplates the action in its entirety: faith alone in Messiah alone resulting salvation. God kept on crediting righteousness to his account.
6. James concludes verse 23 with this clause, "... and he was called the friend of God." The verb "called" is the aorist passive indicative of καλέω (*kaléō*). It refers to an honorary citation, an identifying name or title.
7. Abraham's honorary appellation is stated next, "friend of God." In the Tanakh a word for "friend" is the noun, אָהָב (*'ahav*) used in the singular only four times including 2 Chronicles 20:7 and Isaiah 40:7.
8. These uses in the Tanakh coincide with the use of the word φίλος (*phílos*) in the New Testament, each conveying the idea of personal love. It should not be translated "friend" but "one whom God loves."

James 2:23 and the Scripture was fulfilled which says, "And Abraham had believed God, and it was imputed to him as a credit to his account for righteousness," and he was called, one whom God loves? (EXT)

9. A summary statement on this passage supports our exegesis of James 2:21–23:

Abraham's obedience recounted in Genesis 22 demonstrated his righteousness. It manifested his righteousness and thus brought to fruition God's declaration of Abraham's righteousness that occurred several years earlier in Genesis 15. On this view, the offering of Isaac was not the basis for Abraham's righteousness or even for God's recognition of Abraham as righteous; rather, it was the necessary and proper outworking and manifestation of Abraham's inward righteousness that came by a working faith, so that his faith and works together resulted in a genuinely righteous life. But it is the works, especially the obedience in offering Isaac, not a bare claim to faith, that demonstrated Abraham's righteousness.⁴

⁴ Dan G. McCartney, *James* (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2009), 163–64.



10. That beats slightly around the bush, but the foundational concept of the “working objects of Abraham’s faith is what enabled him to vindicate his faith” on Mount Moriah.”

James 2:24 You see that a man is justified by works and not by faith alone. (NASB)

1. This English translation presents round two in the controversy that arose in verse 21. Let’s note the translations of these two verses from the King James Version:

James 2:21 Was not Abraham our father justified by works, when he had offered Isaac his son upon the altar? (KJV)

James 2:24 Ye see then how that by works a man is justified, and not by faith only. (KJV)

2. In our analysis of verse 21, we established that the best translation of the verb “justified” is “vindicated.” It is important to recall that the Greek verb here is the aorist passive indicative of **δικαίωω** (*dikaiōō*):

To justify. Verbs which end in *-ōō* generally indicate bringing out that which a person is or that which is desired. By implication, to vindicate, approve, honor, glorify, and in the passive voice to receive honor.⁵

δικαίωω. To render a favorable verdict, *vindicate*.⁶

Principle: In James 2:21–26, the offering of Isaac was the production of a mature believer. Abraham functioned from a soul inventory that was developed over the course of forty-five years. His vindication by works was the production of divine good by placing his faith in the working objects of the five paragraphs of the Abrahamic Covenant. What Abraham did on Mount Moriah was the result of absolute, unwavering faith in the ultimate divine fulfillment of those paragraphs.

3. Verse 24 begins with the words, “You see,” from the present active imperative of the verb **ὁράω** (*horáō*): “to keep on seeing.” It is a command to concentrate and comprehend important doctrinal information.
4. The active voice indicates that you must personally concentrate on this commandment so as to ascertaining its doctrinal impact. What is to be acquired in the stream of consciousness is introduced by the conjunction, **ὅτι** (*hóti*): “that.”

⁵ Zodhiates, “δικαίωω,” in *The Complete Word Study Dictionary*. 462; 463.

⁶ Walter Bauer, “δικαίωω,” in *A Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament and other Early Christian Literature*, 3d ed., rev. and ed. Frederick William Danker (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 2000), 249.



5. What this conjunction does is direct the subject's attention to something: "Keep on seeing that." The King James translates it "then," but this is wrong because *hóti* is "that." And the "that" that *hóti* is pointing to is the ablative of means of the plural neuter noun, *ἔργον (érgon)*: "works."
6. When *érgon* is preceded by the preposition, *ἐκ (ek)*, it introduces the genitive of source of the neuter noun, "works."
7. So far our translation reads, "Keep on understanding that out from the source of works." This is followed by the noun *ἄνθρωπος (ánthrōpos)*: "mankind, Homo sapiens, the human race." The best translation is "a person."
8. It is something about the person that becomes extremely important. Out from the source of works a person is "justified," the present passive indicative of the verb, *δικαίωω (dikaiōō)*: "vindicated."
9. The passive voice indicates that the individual under discussion receives vindication while the indicative mood verifies this as a statement of fact.
10. What follows next is the phrase that has contributed to the problem introduced in James 2:21. In that verse we studied the phrase, "justified by works," which planted the seed from which sprouted the false doctrine of election.
11. Fuel is added to this heresy with the closing phase in verse 24, "not by faith alone." The clause begins with the adversative conjunction, *καί (kaí)*: "and," which is followed by the negative conjunction *οὐκ (ouk)*: "not."
12. Then comes the preposition, *ἐκ (ek)*: "by means of" the noun *πίστις (pístis)*: "faith." Up to this point we have the translation, "Keep on understanding that out from the source of works a person is justified and not by means of faith."
13. There are two words in the translation that cause problems and devastatingly so. First the verb *δικαίωω (dikaiōō)*, translated "justified" and the final word in the verse, which is translated by the NASB, NIV, and NET Bibles by the word, "alone." Here's what the dictionaries inform us about the Greek word, *μόνος (mónos)*:

μόνος. Adjective; only, alone, without others, without companions.⁷

μόνος. A marker of limitation, only, limiting the action or state to the one designated by the verb. In isolation *οὐκ ἐκ πίστεως μόνον*, not by faith viewed in isolation. James 2:24.⁸

⁷ Zodhiates, "μόνος," in *The Complete Word Study Dictionary*, 996

⁸ Bauer, "μόνος," in *A Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament*, 659.



14. The only English translation that comes close to the correct translation is the King James which reads, “Ye see then how that by works a man is justified, and not by faith only.”
15. Clarity is achieved when *dikaióō*, translated “justified” in all English Bibles, should be translated by the word, “vindicated.” We see this validated by Zodhiates’s comment, “By implication, to vindicate, approve, honor, glorify,” and By Bauer’s reference, “To render a favorable verdict, vindicate.”
16. The final word, *μόνος*, “alone” although a legitimate synonym of “only,” is grossly misinterpreted by those who support the false doctrine of Limited Atonement. Proponents of the biblical view of Unlimited Atonement profess that salvation is acquired by “faith alone in Christ alone.”
17. What is overlooked, conveniently, by the opposition is that faith is transitive and must have an object, the object clearly stated is Jesus Christ, the working object of one’s faith for receiving salvation of his soul.
18. With these things in mind, let’s see if we can develop a translation of James 2:24 that simply cannot be misunderstood:

James 2:24 Keep on understanding that out from the source of working objects from his soul a person is vindicated. He is not vindicated by means of faith that functions independently of biblically acquired working objects.” (EXT)

19. There are several ways the translation could express the necessity of applying the Word of God to one’s faith. In salvation, that resource is the gospel of Jesus Christ. For the believer, it is the resources that he possesses in his stream of consciousness.
20. Faith has to have something that will work for it. When that working object is missing, then faith, by itself, is nonfunctional. A person can say, “I have faith,” but until the object of that alleged faith is cited the statement means nothing.
21. I have developed the habit of signing off notes I send to others with the phrase, “Keep the faith.” My reference to faith has to do with the necessity of us all to maintain a lifestyle oriented to the Word of God which is the working object of our faith.
22. The problem with my statement is that all my recipients may not have a working object for their faith. This means my comment leaves out the necessity of that faith having an expressed working object.

