

**Romans 4 – Abraham: Father of Faith**

**Review: Romans 1:16“**For I am not ashamed of the gospel, because it is the power of God that brings salvation to everyone who believes: first to the Jew, then to the Gentile.”

This is the essence of what the “*Gospel*” is - Good News!

But no one can understand it as good news, until they know that it’s the remedy for the bad news.

That’s why the next two verses give us a bad news/good news understanding of what this is about;

**3:23“**for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God, : (

**3:24**and all are justified freely by his grace through the redemption that came by Christ Jesus.” : )

**The Story of Abraham**

Ten generations after Adam (The Garden of Eden and the fall of man) – Noah was born.

**Gen 6:5**The Lord saw how great the wickedness of the human race had become on the earth, and that every inclination of the thoughts of the human heart was only evil all the time. **6**The Lord regretted that he had made human beings on the earth, and his heart was deeply troubled. **7**So the Lord said, “I will wipe from the face of the earth the human race I have created—and with them the animals, the birds and the creatures that move along the ground—for I regret that I have made them.” **8**But Noah found favor in the eyes of the Lord.

The Lord did destroy all living things from the earth except eight people, Noah and his family.

Ten generations after Noah (the flood), is when Abraham was born (approx. 2100BC).

The earth had been destroyed by the flood, then repopulated. Mankind still did not seek God; they did evil in God’s eyes and as a result were scattered throughout the earth after they built the tower of Babel.

Abraham was born in Ur (modern Iraq). His Father, Terah was an idol worshipper (Josh 24:2).

The Lord tested the **faith** Abraham (whose name was Abram at the time), by telling him “Lech Lecha” (Famous Hebrew phrase from this passage: “*Go forth!” or “Go out!”).*

**Gen. 12:1-4 “**The Lord had said to Abram, “Go from your country, your people and your father’s household to the land I will show you.

**2**“I will make you into a great nation,
    and I will bless you;
I will make your name great,
    and you will be a blessing.
**3**I will bless those who bless you,
    and whoever curses you I will curse;
and all peoples on earth
    will be blessed through you.”

**4**So Abram went, as the Lord had told him; and Lot went with him.”

**Gen 12: 7**The Lord appeared to Abram and said, “To your offspringI will give this land.” So he built an altar there to the Lord, who had appeared to him.

Abraham acted in profound FAITH to go from his homeland to a place he did not know, BELIEVING in a God he did not fully know. This was credited to him as righteousness.

In Romans 4 Paul uses Abraham as the primary example of someone who was “Justified by Faith” (not works). Abraham lived in a time when there was no written law from God. That would not come until Moses wrote it over 400 years later.

**Romans Chapter 4:**

**4**What then shall we say that Abraham, our forefather according to the flesh, discovered in this matter? **2**If, in fact, Abraham was justified by works, he had something to boast about—but not before God. **3**What does Scripture say? “Abraham believed God, and it was credited to him as righteousness.”

Six different times the Bible uses the phrase *“Abraham believed God, and it was credited to him as righteousness”,* starting with Genesis 15:6. (The book of James uses it to explain that your faith is displayed by your obedience as well.)

**4**Now to the one who works, wages are not credited as a gift but as an obligation. **5**However, to the one who does not work but trusts God who justifies the ungodly, their faith is credited as righteousness. **6**David says the same thing when he speaks of the blessedness of the one to whom God credits righteousness apart from works:

***7****“Blessed are those whose transgressions are forgiven, whose sins are covered.****8****Blessed is the one whose sin the Lord will never count against them.”*

**9**Is this blessedness only for the circumcised, or also for the uncircumcised? We have been saying that Abraham’s faith was credited to him as righteousness. **10**Under what circumstances was it credited? Was it after he was circumcised, or before? It was not after, but before! **11**And he received circumcision as a sign, a seal of the righteousness that he had by faith while he was still uncircumcised.

God reiterated His covenant with Abraham several times, including chapter 17 where in response, Abraham agrees to be circumcised afterwards, but his faith was credited to him as righteousness before he was circumcised.

So then, he is *the father of all who believe*but have not been circumcised, in order that righteousness might be credited to them. **12**And he is then also the father of the circumcised who not only are circumcised but who *also follow in the footsteps of the faith* that our father Abraham had before he was circumcised.

**13**It was not through the law that Abraham and his offspring received the promise that he would be heir of the world, but through the righteousness that comes by faith. **14**For if those who depend on the law are heirs, faith means nothing and the promise is worthless, **15**because the law brings wrath. And where there is no law there is no transgression.

In other words, the law always brings punishment on those who try to obey it. (The only way to avoid breaking the law is to have no law to break!). Remember, Abraham did not have the law of Moses (Torah) all he had was his faith in God. Paul tells us very clearly here that it was enough for him, because he lived before the law was given, and it’s also enough for us who are living after the law was fulfilled.

**16**Therefore, the promise comes by faith, so that it may be by grace and may be guaranteed to all Abraham’s offspring—not only to those who are of the law but also to those who have the faith of Abraham. He is the father of us all.

**17**As it is written: “I have made you a father of many nations.” He is our father in the sight of God, in whom he believed—the God who gives life to the dead and calls into being things that were not.

Abraham’s faith in God was enormous.

Hebrews tell us;

**Hebrews 11:8-10** **“**It was by faith that Abraham obeyed when God called him to leave home and go to another land that God would give him as his inheritance. He went without knowing where he was going. And even when he reached the land God promised him, he lived there by faith—for he was like a foreigner, living in tents. And so did Isaac and Jacob, who inherited the same promise. Abraham was confidently looking forward to a city with eternal foundations, a city designed and built by God.”

He believed God for great things, not only the covenant of Land, Descendants, and Blessing that would be passed through Isaac (not Ishmael) unto Jacob and his sons (the twelve tribes of Israel), but also the future city of God (The new Jerusalem John writes about in Revelation 21).

He believed that God would be true to His word by giving him a child of the promise even though he was 100 years old. In fact God said the child’s name will be Isaac, which means “one who laughs” because Abraham laughed when God told him Sarah would be a son in her old age (Gen. 17:17), and *Sarah laughed* when God said it would happen within a year.

**Gen 18:9**“Where is your wife Sarah?” they asked him. “There, in the tent,” he said. **10**Then one of them said, “I will surely return to you about this time next year, and Sarah your wife will have a son.” Now Sarah was listening at the entrance to the tent, which was behind him. **11**Abraham and Sarah were already very old, and Sarah was past the age of childbearing. **12**So Sarah laughed to herself as she thought, “After I am worn out and my lord is old, will I now have this pleasure?” **13**Then the Lord said to Abraham, “Why did Sarah laugh and say, ‘Will I really have a child, now that I am old?’ **14**Is anything too hard for the Lord? I will return to you at the appointed time next year, and Sarah will have a son.” **15**Sarah was afraid, so she lied and said, “I did not laugh.”But he said, “Yes, you did laugh.”

(Did not, did too, did not did too…)

But Sarah did eventually believe God would keep His promise.

**Hebrews 11:11“**It was by faith that even Sarah was able to have a child, though she was barren and was too old. She believed that God would keep his promise. **12**And so a whole nation came from this one man who was as good as dead—a nation with so many people that, like the stars in the sky and the sand on the seashore, there is no way to count them.”

**The ultimate test of the faith of Abraham was when God told him to sacrifice his son Isaac. It was an unthinkable test, but Abraham went through with it by faith.**

**Gen 22:2 “**Then God said, “Take your son, your only son, *whom you* ***love***—Isaac—and go to the region of Moriah. Sacrifice him there as a burnt offering on a mountain I will show you.”

**>>9**When they reached the place God had told him about, Abraham built an altar there and arranged the wood on it. He bound his son Isaac and laid him on the altar, on top of the wood. **10**Then he reached out his hand and took the knife to slay his son. **11**But the angel of the Lord called out to him from heaven, “Abraham! Abraham!” “Here I am,” he replied. **12**“Do not lay a hand on the boy,” he said. “Do not do anything to him. Now I know that you fear God, because you have not withheld from me your son, your only son.”

How could he have gone through with it?

He had faith in God, and knew that he would keep His promise. He knew that if Isaac died, God would raise him back to life because he was the “child of the Promise.”

**Heb 11:17“**It was by faith that Abraham offered Isaac as a sacrifice when God was testing him. Abraham, who had received God’s promises, was ready to sacrifice his only son, Isaac, **18**even though God had told him, “Isaac is the son through whom your descendants will be counted.” **19**Abraham reasoned that if Isaac died, God was able to bring him back to life again. And in a sense, Abraham did receive his son back from the dead.”

Time and time again through many tests and trials, Abraham proved that his faith was in God, and this faith was credited unto him as righteousness.

**Roman 4:18-25“**Against all hope, Abraham in hope believed and so became the father of many nations, just as it had been said to him, “So shall your offspring be.” **19**Without weakening in his faith, he faced the fact that his body was as good as dead—since he was about a hundred years old—and that Sarah’s womb was also dead. **20**Yet he did not waver through unbelief regarding the promise of God, but was strengthened in his faith and gave glory to God, **21**being fully persuaded that God had power to do what he had promised. **22**This is why “it was credited to him as righteousness.” **23**The words “it was credited to him” were written not for him alone, **24**but also for us, to whom God will credit righteousness—for ***us*** who believe in him who raised Jesus our Lord from the dead. **25**He was delivered over to death for our sins and was raised to life for our justification. **<>**

Regarding Righteousness and Justification, Faith is enough!

Faith was enough for Abraham, who lived *before* the law was given,

and it’s now enough for us who are living after the law was fulfilled.

Jesus fulfilled the law by dying on the cross, and being raised to life again, so that we can be Justified by Faith.

**Do you believe this?**

**DO you believe that we can receive salvation by putting our faith and trust in Jesus’s sacrifice for our sins?**

**If you do you are a believer, and you are saved by grace through Faith.**

**And that faith is credited to you as righteousness.**