

# **“Abraham’s Example”**

Romans 4:18-25

**\*\*\* VIDEO: Hakuna Ma-ta-ta**

**Introduction: Overview of Romans ch. 4:**

Salvation comes **by faith, not works** = vv.1-8

by faith... for works (Eph. 2:8-10)

NOT

by works... for faith

**BAD EXAMPLE: John Stephen Akhwari** of Tanzania

**\*\*\* “Forced effort is NOT Faith!”**

Salvation comes **by grace, not the Law** = vv.9-17

Salvation comes **by divine power, not human effort** = vv.18-25

## **I. Analysis of Abraham’s Faith (vv.18-21)**

***In hope against hope he believed**, so that he might become a father of many nations according to that which had been spoken, “SO SHALL YOUR DESCENDANTS BE.” **19 Without becoming weak in faith** he contemplated his own body, now as good as dead since he was about a hundred years old, and the deadness of Sarah’s womb; **20 yet, with respect to the promise of God, he did not waver in unbelief but grew strong in faith, giving glory to God, 21 and being fully assured that what God had promised, He was able also to perform.***

### **A. “In hope against hope he believed”:**

1. In the face of utter impossibilities... optimistic hope/faith
2. He calls those things that are not as tho they are...
3. He call the dead back to life
4. We need not have our “senses” satisfied if our faith if full!
5. This passage **quotes Genesis 15:5-6**...
  - a. Abraham believed the impossible
  - b. Abraham faith was credited with God’s righteousness
  - c. God fulfilled His promise (albeit after Abe died...)
    - Let that be a lesson for us in “expectations”
    - Your promise may not be fulfilled in your lifetime...

- B. “Without becoming weak in faith” (NO DOUBTING!)  
Matthew 14:31 – “Immediately Jesus stretched out His hand and took hold of him, and say to him, “You of little faith, why did you doubt?”**

***By faith in Jesus... Peter WALKED ON WATER!!!***

- C. In-spite of his own physical weaknesses...**
1. Confidence in God, NOT self
  2. Though he was unable to procreate... he trusted the Creator!
- D. Regardless of circumstances and reported realities**
1. Circumstances don't matter when you have God's promise!
  2. Read Daniel 3... 3 bold boys believing in the face of burning!
- E. “He did not waver in unbelief” when it came to God's promises, “but (rather) grew strong in faith...”**
1. “No Wavering” = “No matter what!”  
\*\*\* **Hebrews 11:1-3 = “Now faith is the assurance of things hoped for, the conviction of things not seen. 2 For by it the men of old gained approval. 3 By faith we understand that the worlds were prepared by the word of God, so that what is seen was not made out of things which are visible.”**
- F. “Giving glory to God”**
1. Godly faith glorifies God!  
  
\*\*\* **VIDEO: Piper: “Why Does God Save By Faith?”**
  2. “Without faith it is impossible to please God”
  3. Read **1 John 5:10 = unbelief calls God a liar...**
- G. Absolute faith that what God says/promises, He does/provides.  
v. 21 “...being fully assured that what God had promised, He was able also to perform.”**
1. God said it, I believe it, that settles it.
  2. Read **James 1:2-4** = give thanks for tests/trials...
    - a. God's blessing that also strengthens our faith – Amen!
    - b. Quote: “Godly faith is not full understanding... but full trust.”

## II. Answer to Abraham's Faith (v.22)

*Therefore IT WAS ALSO CREDITED TO HIM AS RIGHTEOUSNESS.*

- A. v. 22 is **the thrust of Romans chapter 4**...
- B. God reckons/accredits said faith as God's righteousness
- C. **Faith does not "create" grace...**
- D. **Faith "receives" grace...**
- E. When it comes to salvation, both God's grace and our faith are involved... but it is a 90/10 relationship... and our 10 percent was given to us as an early expression of the grace, so that we could give it back to the Lord in exchange for His full grace... (i.e. My Christmas present for dad...)
  - \* **Galatians 4:28** = *"because of your faith you are like Isaac... God's true children of the blessing!"*

Note just a few examples of great faith in the Bible:

**Roman Centurion**

**Nathan**

**Ananias**

**Stephen**

**John the Baptist**

**Paul**

**Contrast: Cain, Hagar, Pharisees, Acts 5, etc.**

- F. Walk thru **Hebrews 11**... note the common thread...

\*\*\* **VIDEO: Piper: "How God Builds Faith"**

- 1. **Faith is active...**
- 2. **Faith obeys**
- 3. More examples from the "Hall of fame of Faith"
  - a. **Abel** – "by faith... tho he is dead, he still speaks"
  - b. **Enoch** – "by faith he would not see death... he was pleasing to God"
  - c. **Noah** – "by faith... prepared an ark..." (120 years in desert)
  - d. **Abraham** – "by faith... obeyed by going out... not knowing where he was going... by faith he lived like an alien... by faith...offered up Isaac (because) God is able to raise people from the dead..."
  - e. **Sarah** – "by faith... received the ability to conceive..."
  - f. **Jacob** – "by faith... worshipped while dying"

- g. **Moses** – “by faith... refused to be called the son of Pharaoh’s daughter, choosing instead to endure ill-treatment w/ the people of God, than to enjoy the passing pleasures of sin, considering the reproach of Christ greater riches than the treasures of Egypt...”
- h. **Joshua** – “by faith...the walls of Jericho fell down...”
- i. **Rahab** – “by faith... the harlot did not perish...”
- j. Time will not permit the accounts of:
  - **Gideon**
  - **Samson**
  - **David**
  - **Samuel**
  - **The Prophets... Read vv.33-38**

**\*\*\* Heb. 11:6 = “...without faith it is impossible to please Him, for he who comes to God must believe that He is and that He is a rewarder of those who seek Him.”**

### III. Application of Abraham’s Faith (vv.23-25)

*Now **not for his sake only** was it written that it was credited to him, **24 but for our sake also**, to whom it will be credited, as **those who believe in Him** who raised Jesus our Lord from the dead, **25 He who was delivered over because of our transgressions, and was raised because of our justification***

- A. God’s truth in/thru Abraham is also for those with his faith
- B. Read **Psalm 78:5-7** = principle of “Truth for all generations”
- C. Read **Romans 15:4** = same as above... teach Scriptural truth to ALL!
  - 1. Read **2 Timothy 1:7** = *For God did not give us a spirit of timidity, but a spirit of power, of love and of self-discipline.*
  - 2. Consider the faith of:
    - Corrie Ten Boom**
    - Dietrich Bonhoeffer** - “Only he who truly believes is obedient and only he who is truly obedient believes.”
- D. **“because of our transgressions”**
  - 1. **Isaiah 53:5** – “by His wounds we were healed...”
  - 2. A faith that embraces the cross, carries its cross with passion!

\*\*\* **VIDEO:** “Jesus Died for Me!”

E. “because of our justification” = restating Rom. 3:21-31 (Gospel!)

**Close: Personalize the Gospel!!!**

Think about **Thomas Hauker’s** faith...

Think about **Jim Elliot’s** faith...

**Hebrews 12:1-2 = *Therefore, since we have so great a cloud of witnesses surrounding us, let us also lay aside every encumbrance and the sin which so easily entangles us, and let us run with endurance the race that is set before us, 2 fixing our eyes on Jesus, the author and Perfecter of faith, who for the joy set before Him endured the cross...***

Think about... and **PRAY about YOUR faith!**