




**Sunday School Lesson**  
**Rom. 4:1-25**  
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**Faith & Abraham**




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**Quick Links to the Study**

I. Context

- a. Historical
- b. Literary

II. Message

- a. Why Abraham? v. 1
- b. What did Abraham gain? vv. 2-21
- c. How does Abraham apply? vv. 22-25

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In this second lesson from Romans four and five, we look at Paul's understanding of faith. The subject, of course, is much broader than these verses discuss. But this chapter of Romans with its similar emphasis in Galatians chapters three and four deal with the matter of the Christian believer's faith as an echo of the faith that the Jewish patriarch Abraham expressed centuries before, as described in the book of Genesis.

**I. Context**

Since this continues the study in Romans begun in the previous lesson, [Sin Is](#), we will refer to the relevant background material from that lesson.

**a. Historical**

The **external history** of Romans can be quickly summarized from the previous study. Paul dictated the letter to Tertius who did the actual writing while they were at Corinth about AD 56-57 and before he returned to Jerusalem with the famine relief offering. The letter was intended to be a letter of introduction with the aim to help secure the support of the Christians in Rome for an anticipated ministry by the apostle in the western Mediterranean reaching as far as Spain. Paul planned to journey to Rome from Antioch after fulfilling his promise to bring the relief offering to Christians in Judea. Of, course, events in Jerusalem radically changed these plans, and Paul ended up in Rome as a prisoner of the Roman government fighting to avoid execution by the emperor.

Regarding the **internal history** of 4:1-25, the didactic nature of the contents limits the scope, but, because it focuses on the story of Abraham, this needs some attention. The more we can understand about the importance of Abraham not just in the Old Testament but among the Jewish people at the beginning of the Christian era, the more sense these verses will make.

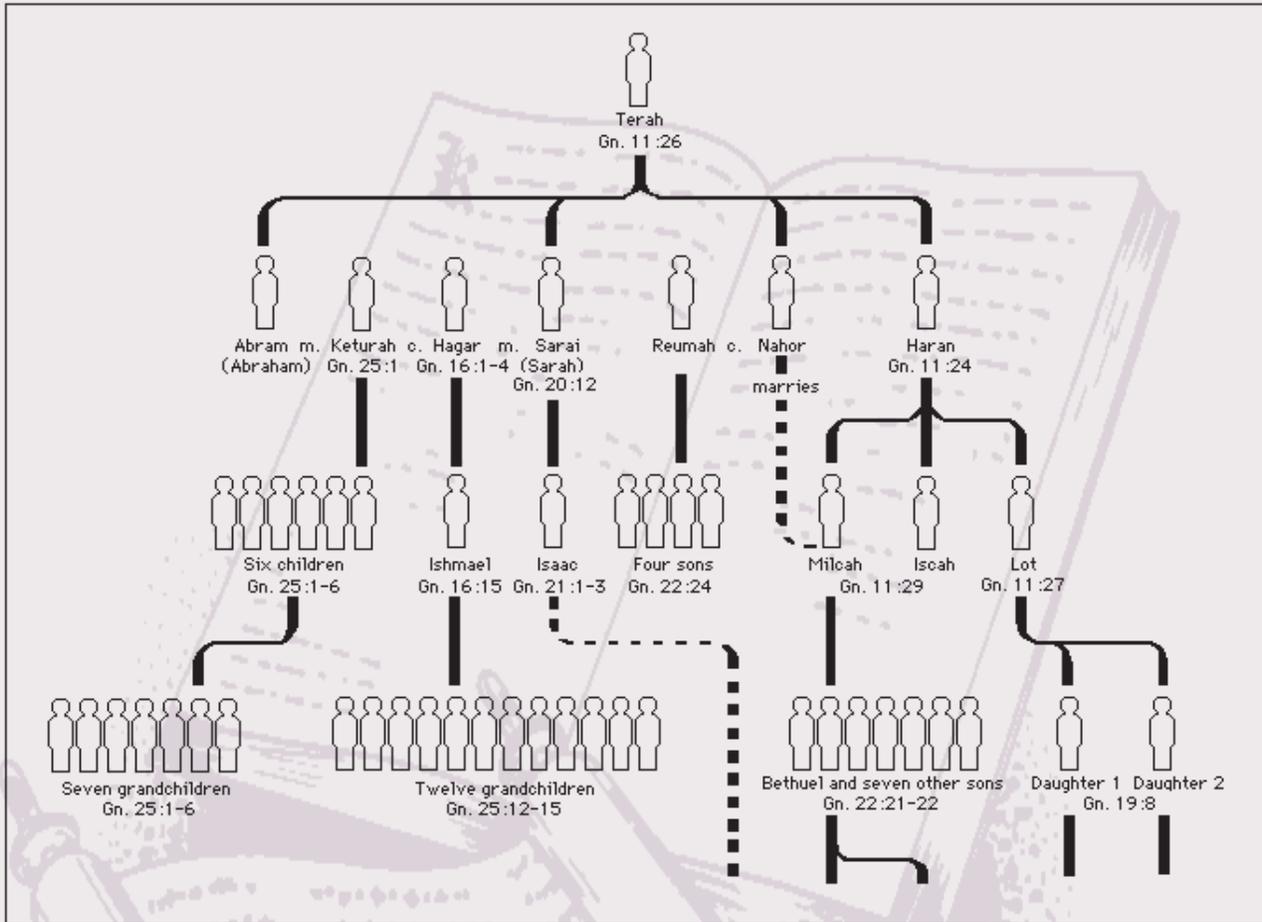
D. J. Wiseman ["Abraham," *New Bible Dictionary*, 3rd rev. ed.] has a helpful summary of Abraham's life and significance:

A descendant of Shem and son of Terah; husband of Sarah and, as father of Isaac, ancestor of the Hebrew nation and, through Ishmael, of other Semites (Gn. 17:5; 25:10-18). His life (Gn. 11:26-25:10; summarized in Acts 7:2-8) is taken as an example of outstanding faith in God (Heb. 11:8-12) by Jew, Christian and Muslim.

**I. The name**

The etymology of the name Abram (Heb. 'a r m used Gn. 11:26-17:4 and rarely elsewhere, cf. 1 Ch. 1:27; Ne. 9:7) is uncertain. It probably means 'the father is exalted' and is a typical specific early W Semitic personal name form of Ab(i)ram. After the covenant of Gn. 17:5 his name is changed to Abraham ('a r h m) and explained as 'father of a multitude' of nations. Both these name forms occur in cuneiform and Egyptian texts from the 19th century BC onwards, but not as identical persons. The latter form, possibly as popular etymology, is generally

Genealogical table of Abraham and his family. (Chart I) (NBD p. 6)



considered a dialectical variant of Abram, though a distinct new name is implied (which may incorporate an early form of Arabic *rhm* = 'multitude').

## II. His career

Abraham was born in \*Ur and moved with his wife Sarai, his father, brothers Nahor and Haran, and nephew Lot to Haran (Gn. 11:26–32). At the age of 75, on his father's death, Abraham moved on to Palestine (Canaan) near Bethel, to Mamre near Hebron, and to Beersheba. At each place he set up an altar and tent-shrine.

His relations with foreigners while staying near Shechem, in Egypt, Gerar and Machpelah, portray him as a respected leader of a group with whom they dealt as with an equal. He acted as acknowledged leader of a coalition which rescued his nephew Lot who had been taken from Sodom by a group of 'kings' (Gn. 14). Stress is laid on his life, not so much as a 'pilgrim', but as a 'resident-alien' (*g r*) without a capital city. He was a wealthy man with servants (14:14) and possessions (13:2), living amicably among Canaanites (12:6), Perizzites (13:7), Philistines (21:34) and Egyptians, and negotiating with Hittites (23).

## III. \*COVENANTS

In accordance with the form of early treaty-covenants, Abraham is granted a covenant-treaty by the 'Great King' Yahweh (15:17–21) and entered into parity-treaties with contemporary powers.

### (i) The land

By covenant Yahweh promised Abraham and his successors the land from the river Euphrates and SW for ever. Abraham's faith was shown both by taking steps to appropriate this divine land-grant from Beersheba (21:33) to Dan (14:14) by symbolic acts, or by taking it over as 'leader' of its multiracial inhabitants by virtue of defeating others who had once controlled it. Yet he did not set up any capital and had to purchase a place to bury his wife (Gn. 23).

### (ii) The family

The same divine covenant promised and reaffirmed to him a family and nations as successors (13:16). Being childless, he first made his major-domo Eliezer of Damascus his heir (15:2). He treated his nephew like an heir, giving him a preferential share in his 'promised' land until Lot chose to move outside to Sodom (13:8–13). Then, aged 86, he had a son, Ishmael, by an Egyptian concubine, Hagar, given him by his wife. They were later

expelled. Then, when Abraham was 99, the promise of family, nation and law was repeated, and Yahweh gave him his change of name and the covenant-sign of male circumcision (17). Again the covenant-promise was confirmed by another theophany at Mamre, despite Sarah's disbelief (18:1–19). A year later Isaac was born.

The great test of Abraham's faith came when Yahweh ordered him to sacrifice Isaac at Moriah. He obeyed, his hand being stayed at the moment of slaughter when a ram was provided as a substitute (22:1–14). Thereupon the covenant between Yahweh and Abraham was reaffirmed (vv. 15–20). Sarah died, aged 127, and was buried in a cave at Machpelah, the freehold of which Abraham purchased from Ephron (23). As his own death approached Abraham made Eliezer swear to obtain a wife for Isaac from his kinsfolk near Harran. Thus Abraham's great-niece Rebekah became the bride of Isaac (24).

Abraham himself in his advanced age married Keturah, whose sons became the ancestors of the tribes of Dedan and Midian. After giving 'all he had' to Isaac and gifts to his other sons Abraham died, aged 175, and was buried at \*MACHPELAH (25:1–10).

Abraham was acknowledged as one able to 'charge his children and his household after him to keep the way of the Lord by doing righteousness and justice' (18:19). He was hospitable, entertaining strangers with respect (18:2–8; 21:8).

#### **IV. His character**

Abraham openly declared his faith in God as almighty (Gn. 17:1), eternal (21:33), the most high (14:22), possessor (Lord) of heaven and earth (14:22; 24:3), and the righteous judge of nations (15:14) and of all mankind (18:25). To him, Yahweh was just (18:25), wise (20:6), righteous (18:19), good (19:19) and merciful (20:6). He accepted the judgment of God upon sin (18:19; 20:11) yet interceded with him for erring Ishmael (17:20) and Lot (18:27–33). Abraham communed with God in close fellowship (18:33; 24:40; 48:15), and was granted special revelation from him in visions (15:1) and visits in human (18:1) or angelic ('messenger') form (22:11, 15). Abraham worshipped Yahweh, calling upon him by that name (13:4) and building an altar for this purpose (12:8; 13:4, 18). His clear monotheism is to be contrasted with the polytheism of his ancestors (Jos. 24:2).

Abraham's faith is perhaps best seen in his ready obedience whenever called by God. By faith he left Ur in \*MESOPOTAMIA (11:31; 15:7), an act emphasized by Stephen (Acts 7:2–4). Similarly he was guided to leave Harran (Gn. 12:1, 4).

He lived for 100 years in the land of Canaan, which had been promised him (Gn. 13:12; 15:18), but this was only a partial fulfillment, since he occupied just a small plot of land at Machpelah and had rights near Beersheba. The supreme trial of his faith came when he was asked to sacrifice Isaac his son, who was, humanly speaking, the only means whereby the divine promises could be fulfilled. His faith rested in a belief in God's ability, if need be, to raise his son from the dead (Gn. 22:12, 18; Heb. 11:19).

His role has been compared with a governor or ruler who, like the later kings, exercised justice under the 'Governor of all the world who will do right' (18:25). Like them he was responsible for law and order, for rescuing abducted persons, defeating the Great King's enemies, ensuring the freedom of local worship (14:20). He was able, and brave enough, to wage war against superior numbers (14:5), and was generous without seeking personal gain (13:9; 14:23).

Incidents which have been considered grave weaknesses in Abraham's character are the apparent deception of the king of Egypt and of Abimelech of Gerar by passing Sarah off as his sister to save his own life (Gn. 12:11–13; 20:2–11). Sarah was Abraham's half-sister (20:12; cf. 11:29). Supposed parallels with Hurrian wife-sister marriage are to be rejected. Sarah was considered faithful both to her husband and to his God (Is. 51:2; Heb. 11:11; 1 Pet. 3:6), so that, while this might be an example of the way the Scriptures portray the fortunes of even the greatest heroes (cf. \*DAVID), it may well be questioned whether this incident is as yet fully understood.

Abraham's statement to Isaac (Gn. 22:8) has been considered deceptive in view of the task ahead. It can, however, be taken as a supreme example of faith ('we will come again', 22:5; cf. Heb. 11:17–19). This incident is moreover an early condemnation of child-sacrifice which was itself rare in the ancient Near East.

#### **V. Theological significance**

Israel was considered 'the seed of Abraham', and Yahweh's action in raising much people from one man was held to be a particularly significant fulfillment of his word (Is. 51:2; Ezk. 33:24). 'The God of Abraham' designated Yahweh throughout Scripture and was the name whereby he revealed himself to Moses (Ex. 3:15). Abraham's monotheism amid idolatry (Jos. 24:2), the way God appeared to him (Ex. 6:3), chose (Ne. 9:7), redeemed (Is. 29:22) and blessed him (Mi. 7:20), and Abraham's faith were a constant theme of exhortation and discussion (1 Macc. 2:52).

In NT times also Abraham was revered as the ancestor of Israel (Acts 13:26), of the levitical priesthood (Heb. 7:5), and of the Messiah himself (Mt. 1:1). Though the popular Jewish superstition that racial descent from Abraham brought divine blessing with it is refuted by the Baptist (Mt. 3:9) and Paul (Rom. 9:7), the unity of the

Hebrews as his descendants was a picture of the unity of believers in Christ (Gal. 3:16, 29). The oath (Lk. 1:73), covenant (Acts 3:13), promise (Rom. 4:13) and blessing (Gal. 3:14) granted Abraham by God's free choice are inherited by his children by faith. Abraham's faith was a type of that which leads to justification (Rom. 4:3-12), a pre-Christ proclamation of the universal gospel (Gal. 3:8). His obedience by faith to his call from Ur to the nomadic life of a 'stranger and pilgrim' and his offering of Isaac are listed as outstanding examples of faith in action (Heb. 11:8-19; Jas. 2:21).

As a great prophet and recipient of the divine covenant Abraham plays a unique role in both Jewish (Ecclus. 44:19-21; *Bereshith Rabba*; *Pirqe Aboth* 5. 4; Jos., *Ant.* 1.7-8) and Muslim traditions (188 refs. in Qur'an).

## **b. Literary**

The literary setting for 4:1-25 remains virtually the same as for 5:12-21. Thus I will repeat the [previous material](#). The structure of the letter falls into the following segments of the ancient letter form, as outlined in the page on Paul's [Middle Period of Writing](#) at Cranfordville.com:

Praescriptio, 1:1-7

Superscriptio, vv. 1-6

Adscriptio, v. 7a

Salutatio, v. 7b

Proem, 1:8-15

Body, 1:16-15:33

Conclusio, 16:1-27

Thus 4:1-25 is a segment of the Body section of the letter. The arrangement of the contents of the Body of the letter typically are understood around a twofold division: chaps. 1-11 are doctrinally oriented while chaps 12-15 are mainly behavior oriented.

In order to get a better sense of the thought flow, the outline of Romans that I published years ago in a two volume study manual on the New Testament can be of some help:

Introduction 1:1-17

### **I. Redemption needed 1:18-3:20**

### **II. Redemption provided 3:21-8:39**

#### **A. Justification of the sinner (3:21-5:21)**

1. Its method (3:21 -31)

2. Its example (4:1-25)

3. Its results (5:1-11)

4. Its basis ( 5: 12-21)

#### **B. Sanctification of the believer (6:1-8:39)**

1. The believer and sin (6:1-23)

2. The believer and the law (7:1-25)

3. The believer and the Holy Spirit (8 1-39)

### **III. Redemption and a problem 9:1-11:36**

### **IV. Redemption applied 12:1-15:13**

Conclusio (16:1-27)

From this one can easily see the foundational thought flow revolves around the justification of the sinner beginning in 3:21 and concluding in 5:21. Our passage stands as the second segment of that material. The discussion of Abraham in 4:1-25 grows out of the issue of whether Jews and non-Jews are saved the same way (3:29-30) and the role of the Jewish Law (Torah) in that salvation process (3:31). How does faith come into the picture after the work of Christ? Paul attempts to address these issues in 4:1-25 through using Abraham as the model for Christian faith.

Also important to the larger literary background of the discussion of Abraham is Paul's discussion of the same topic in [Gal. 3:6-18](#) (NRSV):

6 Just as Abraham "believed God, and it was reckoned to him as righteousness," 7 so, you see, those who believe are the descendants of Abraham. 8 And the scripture, foreseeing that God would justify the Gentiles by faith, declared the gospel beforehand to Abraham, saying, "All the Gentiles shall be blessed in you." 9 For this reason, those who believe are blessed with Abraham who believed. 10 For all who rely on the works of the law are under a curse; for it is written, "Cursed is everyone who does not observe and obey all the things written in the book of the law." 11 Now it is evident that no one is justified before God by the law; for "The one who is righteous will live by

faith." 12 But the law does not rest on faith; on the contrary, "Whoever does the works of the law will live by them." 13 Christ redeemed us from the curse of the law by becoming a curse for us—for it is written, "Cursed is everyone who hangs on a tree"— 14 in order that in Christ Jesus the blessing of Abraham might come to the Gentiles, so that we might receive the promise of the Spirit through faith. 15 Brothers and sisters, I give an example from daily life: once a person's will has been ratified, no one adds to it or annuls it. 16 Now the promises were made to Abraham and to his offspring; it does not say, "And to offsprings," as of many; but it says, "And to your offspring," that is, to one person, who is Christ. 17 My point is this: the law, which came four hundred thirty years later, does not annul a covenant previously ratified by God, so as to nullify the promise. 18 For if the inheritance comes from the law, it no longer comes from the promise; but God granted it to Abraham through the promise.

Additionally, a shorter discussion of Abraham surfaces in [Gal. 4:21-31](#) (NRSV):

21 Tell me, you who desire to be subject to the law, will you not listen to the law? 22 For it is written that Abraham had two sons, one by a slave woman and the other by a free woman. 23 One, the child of the slave, was born according to the flesh; the other, the child of the free woman, was born through the promise. 24 Now this is an allegory: these women are two covenants. One woman, in fact, is Hagar, from Mount Sinai, bearing children for slavery. 25 Now Hagar is Mount Sinai in Arabia and corresponds to the present Jerusalem, for she is in slavery with her children. 26 But the other woman corresponds to the Jerusalem above; she is free, and she is our mother. 27 For it is written, "Rejoice, you childless one, you who bear no children, burst into song and shout, you who endure no birth pangs; for the children of the desolate woman are more numerous than the children of the one who is married." 28 Now you, my friends, are children of the promise, like Isaac. 29 But just as at that time the child who was born according to the flesh persecuted the child who was born according to the Spirit, so it is now also. 30 But what does the scripture say? "Drive out the slave and her child; for the child of the slave will not share the inheritance with the child of the free woman." 31 So then, friends, we are children, not of the slave but of the free woman.

Equally important as a part of a larger literary background is the discussion of Abraham in [James 2:20-24](#) (NRSV):

20 Do you want to be shown, you senseless person, that faith apart from works is barren? 21 Was not our ancestor Abraham justified by works when he offered his son Isaac on the altar? 22 You see that faith was active along with his works, and faith was brought to completion by the works. 23 Thus the scripture was fulfilled that says, "Abraham believed God, and it was reckoned to him as righteousness," and he was called the friend of God. 24 You see that a person is justified by works and not by faith alone.

At appropriate segments in the study we will bring aspects of these other discussions on Abraham into the study of Romans four.

## II. Message

Again, Paul's charting out of his ideas in chapter four proves to be challenging, although not nearly as complex as was 5:12-21. In the larger lesson posted on the internet, both the [block diagram](#) and the [semantic diagram](#) of the Greek text of chapter four prove to be helpful assessments, and together form the basis for organizing our study here.

The rhetorical structure of these twenty-five verses revolves around three central points. Paul first raised the issue of Abraham in verse one with a rhetorical question (NRSV): "What then are we to say was gained by Abraham, our ancestor according to the flesh?" In vv. 2-20, Paul expresses his own insights in response to this question. A lot of his discussion hinges upon his interpretation of [Gen. 15:6](#) and [Ps. 32:1-2](#), which are heavily used in this discussion. The final segment, vv. 21-25, Paul connects up Abraham to Christians in applying the previous discussion.

### a. Why Abraham?, v. 1

GNT	NASB	NRSV	NLT
4:1 Τί οὖν ἐροῦμεν εὐρηκέναι Ἀβραάμ τὸν προπάτορα ἡμῶν κατὰ σάρκα;	1 What then shall we say that Abraham, our forefather according to the flesh, has found?	1 What then are we to say was gained by Abraham, our ancestor according to the flesh?	1 Abraham was, humanly speaking, the founder of our Jewish nation. What were his experiences concerning this question of being saved by faith?

## Notes:

To some Christians today the question might arise as to why bring Abraham into a discussion of God's salvation through Christ. For the Christians in the beginning Christian century, especially those who were Jewish, the connection of Abraham to their Christian experience was very important. For Jews over the centuries until this day, Abraham is -- as Paul said -- "our forefather." That is, he is considered to be the founding father of the Jewish people. Of course, in our world Arabs and Muslims also make the same claim. Christians, as well, tend to trace their spiritual roots back to Abraham through Jesus. So the issue of our connection as Christians to Abraham remains an important concern in our world still.

For Paul, the immediate concern to his initial readers was the role of Abraham's faith as the connecting link for believers to Abraham as a spiritual father and model. Additionally, the ancient Jewish scribal tradition had linked Abraham to Moses and the giving of the Law on Mt. Sinai. Thus from Paul's previous discussion in [3:21-31](#), the matter of being saved was for most Jews of Paul's day a matter of obeying those laws of Moses which helped secure one's status as a child of Abraham and thus becoming acceptable to God through the covenant God made with Abraham. Being properly circumcised as a male was the mark of that covenant and an absolute necessity to participating in that covenant. Paul reacted strongly against this view of salvation, and had argued against it vigorously in [3:21-31](#) (NRSV):

21 But now, apart from law, the righteousness of God has been disclosed, and is attested by the law and the prophets, 22 the righteousness of God through faith in Jesus Christ for all who believe. For there is no distinction, 23 since all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God; 24 they are now justified by his grace as a gift, through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus, 25 whom God put forward as a sacrifice of atonement by his blood, effective through faith. He did this to show his righteousness, because in his divine forbearance he had passed over the sins previously committed; 26 it was to prove at the present time that he himself is righteous and that he justifies the one who has faith in Jesus. 27 Then what becomes of boasting? It is excluded. By what law? By that of works? No, but by the law of faith. 28 For we hold that a person is justified by faith apart from works prescribed by the law. 29 Or is God the God of Jews only? Is he not the God of Gentiles also? Yes, of Gentiles also, 30 since God is one; and he will justify the circumcised on the ground of faith and the uncircumcised through that same faith. 31 Do we then overthrow the law by this faith? By no means! On the contrary, we uphold the law.

In our world this issue of Abraham, covenant, and Law becomes a critical issue for Jewish people who begin to seriously consider becoming a Christian. Most Jewish people in our day will never consider Christianity until satisfactory answers to these connecting links to Christ and Christianity are found. Thus, Paul's answers in the following verses become important sources for finding those answers.

### b. What did Abraham gain?, vv. 2-21

GNT	NASB	NRSV	NLT
4:2 εἰ γὰρ Ἀβραὰμ ἐξ ἔργων ἐδικαιώθη, ἔχει καύχημα, ἀλλ' οὐ πρὸς θεόν. 4:3 τί γὰρ ἡ γραφὴ λέγει; Ἐπίστευσεν δὲ Ἀβραὰμ τῷ θεῷ καὶ ἐλογίσθη αὐτῷ εἰς δικαιοσύνην. 4:4 τῷ δὲ ἐργαζομένῳ ὁ μισθὸς οὐ λογίζεται κατὰ χάριν ἀλλὰ κατὰ ὀφείλημα, 4:5 τῷ δὲ μὴ ἐργαζομένῳ πιστεύοντι δὲ ἐπὶ τὸν δικαιῶντα τὸν ἀσεβῆ λογίζεται ἡ πίστις αὐτοῦ	2 For if Abraham was justified by works, he has something to boast about, but not before God. 3 For what does the Scripture say? "ABRAHAM BELIEVED GOD, AND IT WAS CREDITED TO HIM AS RIGHTEOUSNESS." 4 Now to the one who works, his wage is not credited as a favor, but as what is due. 5 But to the one who does not work, but believes in Him who justifies the ungodly, his faith is credited as righ-	2 For if Abraham was justified by works, he has something to boast about, but not before God. 3 For what does the scripture say? "Abraham believed God, and it was reckoned to him as righteousness." 4 Now to one who works, wages are not reckoned as a gift but as something due. 5 But to one who without works trusts him who justifies the ungodly, such faith is reckoned as righteousness. 6 So also David speaks of the	2 Was it because of his good deeds that God accepted him? If so, he would have had something to boast about. But from God's point of view Abraham had no basis at all for pride. 3 For the Scriptures tell us, "Abraham believed God, so God declared him to be righteous." 4 When people work, their wages are not a gift. Workers earn what they receive. 5 But people are declared righteous because of their faith, not because of their work. 6 King David spoke of this, describing the happi-

εἰς δικαιοσύνην· 4·6  
καθάπερ καὶ Δαυὶδ λέγει  
τὸν μακαρισμὸν τοῦ  
ἀνθρώπου ᾧ ὁ θεὸς  
λογίζεται δικαιοσύνην  
χωρὶς ἔργων, 4·7  
Μακάριοι ὧν ἀφέθησαν αἱ  
ἀνομίαι καὶ ὧν  
ἐπεκαλύφθησαν αἱ  
ἀμαρτίαι· 4·8 μακάριος  
ἀνὴρ οὗ οὐ μὴ λογίσθαι  
κύριος ἀμαρτίαν. 4·9 ὁ  
μακαρισμὸς οὖν οὗτος ἐπὶ  
τὴν περιτομὴν ἢ καὶ ἐπὶ  
τὴν ἀκροβυστίαν;  
λέγομεν γάρ, Ἐλογίσθη  
τῷ Ἀβραάμ ἡ πίστις εἰς  
δικαιοσύνην. 4·10 πῶς  
οὖν ἐλογίσθη; ἐν  
περιτομῇ ὄντι ἢ ἐν  
ἀκροβυστίᾳ οὐκ ἐν  
περιτομῇ ἀλλ' ἐν  
ἀκροβυστίᾳ 4·11 καὶ  
σημεῖον ἔλαβεν  
περιτομῆς σφραγίδα τῆς  
δικαιοσύνης τῆς πίστεως  
τῆς ἐν τῇ ἀκροβυστίᾳ, εἰς  
τὸ εἶναι αὐτὸν πατέρα  
πάντων τῶν πιστευόντων  
δι' ἀκροβυστίας, εἰς τὸ  
λογισθῆναι καὶ αὐτοῖς  
τὴν δικαιοσύνην, 4·12  
καὶ πατέρα περιτομῆς  
τοῖς οὐκ ἐκ περιτομῆς  
μόνον ἀλλὰ καὶ τοῖς  
στοιχοῦσιν τοῖς ἴχθυσιν  
τῆς ἐν ἀκροβυστίᾳ  
πίστεως τοῦ πατρὸς ἡμῶν  
Ἀβραάμ.

4·13 Οὐ γὰρ διὰ νόμου  
ἢ ἐπαγγελία τῷ Ἀβραάμ  
ἢ τῷ σπέρματι αὐτοῦ, τὸ  
κληρονόμον αὐτὸν εἶναι  
κόσμου, ἀλλὰ διὰ

teousness, 6 just as  
David also speaks of the  
blessing on the man to  
whom God credits righ-  
teousness apart from  
works: 7 "BLESSED  
ARE THOSE WHOSE  
LAWLESS DEEDS  
HAVE BEEN FOR-  
GIVEN, AND WHOSE  
SINS HAVE BEEN COV-  
ERED. 8 "BLESSED IS  
THE MAN WHOSE SIN  
THE LORD WILL NOT  
TAKE INTO ACCOUNT."  
9 Is this blessing then on  
the circumcised, or on  
the uncircumcised also?  
For we say, "FAITH WAS  
CREDITED TO ABRA-  
HAM AS RIGHTEOUS-  
NESS." 10 How then was  
it credited? While he was  
circumcised, or uncir-  
cumcised? Not while cir-  
cumcised, but while un-  
circumcised; 11 and he  
received the sign of cir-  
cumcision, a seal of the  
righteousness of the faith  
which he had while un-  
circumcised, so that he  
might be the father of all  
who believe without be-  
ing circumcised, that  
righteousness might be  
credited to them, 12 and  
the father of circumcision  
to those who not only are  
of the circumcision, but  
who also follow in the  
steps of the faith of our  
father Abraham which he  
had while uncircum-  
cised.

13 For the promise to  
Abraham or to his de-  
scendants that he would  
be heir of the world was  
not through the Law, but  
through the righteous-

blessedness of those to  
whom God reckons righ-  
teousness apart from  
works: 7 "Blessed are  
those whose iniquities  
are forgiven, and whose  
sins are covered; 8  
blessed is the one  
against whom the Lord  
will not reckon sin." 9 Is  
this blessedness, then,  
pronounced only on the  
circumcised, or also on  
the uncircumcised? We  
say, "Faith was reckoned  
to Abraham as righteous-  
ness." 10 How then was  
it reckoned to him? Was  
it before or after he had  
been circumcised? It  
was not after, but before  
he was circumcised. 11  
He received the sign of  
circumcision as a seal of  
the righteousness that  
he had by faith while he  
was still uncircumcised.  
The purpose was to  
make him the ancestor of  
all who believe without  
being circumcised and  
who thus have righteous-  
ness reckoned to them,  
12 and likewise the an-  
cestor of the circumcised  
who are not only circum-  
cised but who also follow  
the example of the faith  
that our ancestor Abra-  
ham had before he was  
circumcised.

13 For the promise that  
he would inherit the world  
did not come to Abraham  
or to his descendants  
through the law but  
through the righteous-  
ness of faith. 14 If it is  
the adherents of the law  
who are to be the heirs,  
faith is null and the promise is

ness of an undeserving sin-  
ner who is declared to be  
righteous: 7 "Oh, what joy  
for those whose disobedi-  
ence is forgiven, whose sins  
are put out of sight. 8 Yes,  
what joy for those whose sin  
is no longer counted against  
them by the Lord." 9 Now  
then, is this blessing only  
for the Jews, or is it for Gen-  
tiles, too? Well, what about  
Abraham? We have been  
saying he was declared righ-  
teous by God because of his  
faith. 10 But how did his faith  
help him? Was he declared  
righteous only after he had  
been circumcised, or was it  
before he was circumcised?  
The answer is that God ac-  
cepted him first, and then he  
was circumcised later! 11  
The circumcision ceremony  
was a sign that Abraham  
already had faith and that  
God had already accepted  
him and declared him to be  
righteous – even before he  
was circumcised. So Abra-  
ham is the spiritual father  
of those who have faith but  
have not been circumcised.  
They are made right with  
God by faith. 12 And Abra-  
ham is also the spiritual fa-  
ther of those who have been  
circumcised, but only if they  
have the same kind of faith  
Abraham had before he was  
circumcised.

13 It is clear, then, that  
God's promise to give the  
whole earth to Abraham and  
his descendants was not  
based on obedience to  
God's law, but on the new  
relationship with God that  
comes by faith. 14 So if you  
claim that God's promise is  
for those who obey God's law  
and think they are "good

δικαιοσύνης πίστεως.  
4:14 εἰ γὰρ οἱ ἐκ νόμου κληρονόμοι, κεκένωται ἡ πίστις καὶ κατήρηται ἡ ἐπαγγελία· 4:15 ὁ γὰρ νόμος ὀργὴν κατεργάζεται, οὗ δὲ οὐκ ἔστιν νόμος οὐδὲ παράβασις. 4:16 διὰ τοῦτο ἐκ πίστεως, ἵνα κατὰ χάριν, εἰς τὸ εἶναι βεβαίαν τὴν ἐπαγγελίαν παντὶ τῷ σπέρματι, οὐ τῷ ἐκ τοῦ νόμου μόνον ἀλλὰ καὶ τῷ ἐκ πίστεως Ἀβραάμ, ὅς ἐστιν πατὴρ πάντων ἡμῶν, 4:17 καθὼς γέγραπται ὅτι Πατέρα πολλῶν ἐθνῶν τέθεικά σε, κατέναντι οὗ ἐπίστευσεν θεοῦ τοῦ ζῶ οποιῶντος τοὺς νεκροὺς καὶ καλοῦντος τὰ μὴ ὄντα ὡς ὄντα· 4:18 ὃς παρ' ἐλπίδα ἐπ' ἐλπίδι ἐπίστευσεν εἰς τὸ γενέσθαι αὐτὸν πατέρα πολλῶν ἐθνῶν κατὰ τὸ εἰρημένον, Οὕτως ἔσται τὸ σπέρμα σου, 4:19 καὶ μὴ ἀσθενήσας τῇ πίστει κατενόησεν τὸ ἑαυτοῦ σῶμα ἤδη νενεκρωμένον, ἑκατονταετῆς πού ὑπάρχων, καὶ τὴν νέκρωσιν τῆς μήτρας Σάρρας· 4:20 εἰς δὲ τὴν ἐπαγγελίαν τοῦ θεοῦ οὐ διεκρίθη τῇ ἀπιστίᾳ ἀλλ' ἐνεδυναμώθη τῇ πίστει, δοὺς δόξαν τῷ θεῷ· 4:21 καὶ πληροφορηθεὶς ὅτι ὁ ἐπήγγελται δυνατός ἐστιν καὶ ποιῆσαι.

ness of faith. 14 For if those who are of the Law are heirs, faith is made void and the promise is nullified; 15 for the Law brings about wrath, but where there is no law, there also is no violation. 16 For this reason it is by faith, in order that it may be in accordance with grace, so that the promise will be guaranteed to all the descendants, not only to those who are of the Law, but also to those who are of the faith of Abraham, who is the father of us all, 17 (as it is written, "A FATHER OF MANY NATIONS HAVE I MADE YOU") in the presence of Him whom he believed, even God, who gives life to the dead and calls into being that which does not exist. 18 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.

void. 15 For the law brings wrath; but where there is no law, neither is there violation. 16 For this reason it depends on faith, in order that the promise may rest on grace and be guaranteed to all his descendants, not only to the adherents of the law but also to those who share the faith of Abraham (for he is the father of all of us, 17 as it is written, "I have made you the father of many nations")—in the presence of the God in whom he believed, who gives life to the dead and calls into existence the things that do not exist. 18 Hoping against hope, he believed that he would become "the father of many nations," according to what was said, "So numerous shall your descendants be." 19 He did not weaken in faith when he considered his own body, which was already as good as dead (for he was about a hundred years old), or when he considered the barrenness of Sarah's womb. 20 No distrust made him waver concerning the promise of God, but he grew strong in his faith as he gave glory to God, 21 being fully convinced that God was able to do what he had promised. enough" in God's sight, then you are saying that faith is useless. And in that case, the promise is also meaningless. 15 But the law brings punishment on

those who try to obey it. (The only way to avoid breaking the law is to have no law to break!) 16 So that's why faith is the key! God's promise is given to us as a free gift. And we are certain to receive it, whether or not we follow Jewish customs, if we have faith like Abraham's. For Abraham is the father of all who believe. 17 That is what the Scriptures mean when God told him, "I have made you the father of many nations." This happened because Abraham believed in the God who brings the dead back to life and who brings into existence what didn't exist before. 18 When God promised Abraham that he would become the father of many nations, Abraham believed him. God had also said, "Your descendants will be as numerous as the stars," even though such a promise seemed utterly impossible! 19 And Abraham's faith did not weaken, even though he knew that he was too old to be a father at the age of one hundred and that Sarah, his wife, had never been able to have children. 20 Abraham never wavered in believing God's promise. In fact, his faith grew stronger, and in this he brought glory to God. 21 He was absolutely convinced that God was able to do anything he promised.

## Notes:

These verses, obviously, make up the heart of the passage, in that they function as the answer to the question posed in verse one. The thought flow in these verses is somewhat challenging to comprehend. But, some general observations can help get a handle on it. First, Paul argues his point here very much like an ancient Jewish scribe. Often they raised an issue, linked it to a scripture passage, and then exegeted the scripture passage against the issue being addressed. This was a very different approach than was found in the Greco-Roman tradition and manuals of rhetoric of that time. In these verses two Old Testament scripture texts play a central role: Gen. 15:6 and Ps. 32:1-2, with the Genesis passage being more important.

Additionally, the interpreting of scripture texts in scribal Judaism often progressed forward by picking up on key concepts through words, phrases etc. in the scripture text and relating them to the issue under consideration. Sometimes an explanation of one key idea in the first scripture triggered a connection to a second passage which was used to support the interpretation being given to the first passage. This is pretty much how the ideas flow in vv. 2-21 as well. For a more detailed analysis, see the [Semantic Diagram](#) in the internet version of this study.

The defining of the issue as the heart of Paul's answer to what Abraham gained on the matter of faith is set forth in verse two (NRSV): "For if Abraham was justified by works, he has something to boast about, but not before God." For most Jews of Paul's day, even Abraham was justified by obeying the Law of Moses even though Moses would not receive the Law on Sinai until some four centuries after Abraham had died, as Paul pointed out to the Galatians in an earlier letter (cf. [Gal. 3:17](#)).

Central to Paul's discussion is the couching of the issue of salvation as an either/or option in 3:21-31. Justification before God (=being made right with God) comes either from obeying the Torah ("works of law") as scribal Judaism asserted, or else it comes solely through faith in Christ who provides the justification for us before God. In 4:2, Paul is addressing an implication of the "works of Law" view. Spiritual elitism would have been legitimate for Abraham, had he have been justified before God this way. Traditional Jewish thinking was that Abraham obeyed God better than any of his descendents.

But Paul knows that Abraham wasn't made right before God this way. Thus he appeals to Gen. 15:6 as the correct scriptural view that Abraham's faith was what made him right before God (NRSV): "Abraham believed God, and it was reckoned to him as righteousness".

Two critical elements of this OT verse will be explored by Paul in the following verses: "reckoned" (ἐλογίσθη) and "believed" (Ἐπίστευσεν).

First, in vv. 4-10, Paul explores these concepts in regard to Abraham. Initially a couple of observations are made in vv. 4-5 (NRSV): "4 Now to one who works, wages are not reckoned as a gift but as something due. 5 But to one who without works trusts him who justifies the ungodly, such faith is reckoned as righteousness." If salvation comes by "works" then we can leverage God for it by our deeds. But simple faith in God can bring acceptability, as Abraham illustrates (by implication here). For the ungodly, faith is the only possible option, since they lack "works."

David's hymn of praise in [Ps. 32:1-2](#) is seen as a further confirmation of Paul's view of Gen. 15:6 in verses 6-9 (NRSV): "6 So also David speaks of the blessedness of those to whom God reckons righteousness apart from works: 7 'Blessed are those whose iniquities are forgiven, and whose sins are covered; 8 blessed is the one against whom the Lord will not reckon sin.' 9 Is this blessedness, then, pronounced only on the circumcised, or also on the uncircumcised? We say, 'Faith was reckoned to Abraham as righteousness.'" Notice the reoccurring "reckoned" in these verses. This is a link of Ps. 32:1-2 to Paul's discussion.

In Paul's comments on Ps. 32 and Gen. 15 in verse nine, the issue of circumcision is brought up. That leads to the next elaboration in verse 10 (NRSV): "How then was it reckoned to him? Was it before or after he had been circumcised? It was not after, but before he was circumcised." In it Paul makes the vigorous point that Abraham was "justified by faith" during a time prior to being circumcised, rather than after having been circumcised. In the Genesis narrative Abraham's "justification" came shortly after his migration from Ur of Chaldees to the land of Canaan ([Gen. 15:6](#)). Then when Abraham was 99 years old, the ritual of circumcision was instituted by God as a sign of the covenant ([Gen. 17](#)) -- some 24 years later.

Then what was circumcision for? In verses 11-12 Paul elaborates on the Gen. 17 concept of circumci-

sion as a sign of the covenant (NRSV): “11 He received the sign of circumcision as a seal of the righteousness that he had by faith while he was still uncircumcised. The purpose was to make him the ancestor of all who believe without being circumcised and who thus have righteousness reckoned to them, 12 and likewise the ancestor of the circumcised who are not only circumcised but who also follow the example of the faith that our ancestor Abraham had before he was circumcised.” Paul picks up on the phrase “ancestor of a multitude of nations” in Gen. 17:4 (cf. vv. 5-6) as the purpose of the covenant as signified by circumcision. To Paul, this applies to believers who through a faith similar to that of Abraham brings them into this covenant made with Abraham by God. Thus spiritual likeness rather than racial descendency is critical to covenant participation.

This covenant is now seen as a divine promise (vv. 13-21) that is realized to Abraham’s true descendants the same way it was made to Abraham -- on the basis of genuine faith, rather than through Torah obedience. Note a particularly important phrase in v. 13b: “through the righteousness of faith” (διὰ δικαιοσύνης πίστεως). The expression gets at the idea of the righteousness that faith produces” (πίστεως is an example of the subjective genitive case). If the covenant promise could be realized through Torah obedience, faith would be nullified (vv. 14-15). But it can’t, and faith is the only path to righteousness before God (vv. 16-21). It was this way with Abraham, and remains the same way with believers who exhibit the same kind of faith that Abraham modeled. Over a century Abraham trusted God to keep His word about making Abraham the father of many descendants. He “didn’t waver” (vv. 20-21) but was strengthened in his faith through giving God praise. Paul’s words cover the abortive effort with Hagar and Ishmael, and thus one should be careful about seeing Abraham’s unwavering faith as a perfect faith. It wasn’t, but it was steady and strong none the less.

Here is a key for us today. Abraham’s life becomes a model for faith and faithfulness. He wasn’t a perfect man by any stretch. There were failures and acts of disobedience. But through it all, Abraham remained fundamentally committed to doing God’s bidding and expressed unqualified confidence in God to lead him and to keep His promises. We can do no better!

It is at this point that the [James two](#) use of Abraham’s faith applies. James’ was making a similar point that that of Paul’s here when James talked about Abraham being vindicated by his acts of obedience growing out of his faith.

### c. How does Abraham apply?, vv. 21-25

GNT	NASB	NRSV	NLT
<p>4:22 διὸ καὶ ἐλογίσθη αὐτῷ εἰς δικαιοσύνην. 4:23 Οὐκ ἐγράφη δὲ δι’ αὐτὸν μόνον ὅτι ἐλογίσθη αὐτῷ 4:24 ἀλλὰ καὶ δι’ ἡμᾶς, οἷς μέλλει λογίζεσθαι, τοῖς πιστεύουσιν ἐπὶ τὸν ἐγείραντα Ἰησοῦν τὸν κύριον ἡμῶν ἐκ νεκρῶν, 4:25 ὃς παρεδόθη διὰ τὰ παραπτώματα ἡμῶν καὶ ἠγέρθη διὰ τὴν δικαίωσιν ἡμῶν.</p>	<p>22 Therefore IT WAS ALSO CREDITED TO HIM AS RIGHTEOUSNESS. 23 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.</p>	<p>22 Therefore his faith "was reckoned to him as righteousness." 23 Now the words, "it was reckoned to him," were written not for his sake alone, 24 but for ours also. It will be reckoned to us who believe in him who raised Jesus our Lord from the dead, 25 who was handed over to death for our trespasses and was raised for our justification.</p>	<p>22 And because of Abraham's faith, God declared him to be righteous. 23 Now this wonderful truth – that God declared him to be righteous – wasn't just for Abraham's benefit. 24 It was for us, too, assuring us that God will also declare us to be righteous if we believe in God, who brought Jesus our Lord back from the dead. 25 He was handed over to die because of our sins, and he was raised from the dead to make us right with God.</p>

#### Notes:

With the “therefore” ( διὸ) Paul brings this discussion to a close in applying it to believers in Christ.

Abraham express authentic faith and it meant acceptability to a righteous God. Anyone -- Jew or Gentile - - can express a similar faith in the crucified and resurrected Christ and find that same acceptability before the same righteous God. Note again the “reckoned” terminology (vv. 22-24). To be “reckoned as righteous” is for Paul “to be justified before God.”

Another important observation. When Paul speaks of believing in v. 24, it is couched in language that means living out a faith consistently over a life of commitment, not just the initial confession at conversion. The present participle in the Greek, τοῖς πιστεύουσιν, carries with it the same point made repeatedly by James 2:14-26: “faith without works is dead.” As the old cliché goes, “Works don’t save; only a working faith does!”



Diagram

1 οὖν  
1 Τί ἐροῦμεν  
εὐρηκέναι Ἀβραάμ  
τὸν προπάτορα ἡμῶν κατὰ σάρκα;

2 γὰρ  
2 εἰ Ἀβραάμ... ἐδικαιώθη,  
ἔχει καύχημα,  
ἀλλ'  
3 οὐ (ἔχει καύχημα)  
πρὸς θεόν.

3 γὰρ  
4 τί ἡ γραφή λέγει;

5 δὲ  
Ἐπίστευσεν Ἀβραάμ τῷ θεῷ  
καὶ  
6 ἐλογίσθη αὐτῷ  
εἰς δικαιοσύνην.

Gen. 15:6

4 δὲ  
7 τῷ ἐργαζομένῳ ὁ μισθὸς οὐ λογίζεται  
κατὰ χάριν  
ἀλλὰ

8 -----  
5 δὲ  
9 τῷ μὴ ἐργαζομένῳ  
δὲ  
-- πιστεύοντι  
ἐπὶ τὸν δικαιοῦντα τὸν ἀσεβῆ

λογίζεται ἡ πίστις αὐτοῦ  
εἰς δικαιοσύνην·

6 καθάπερ καὶ Δαυὶδ λέγει τὸν μακαρισμὸν  
τοῦ ἀνθρώπου  
/-----|  
ὃ ὁ θεὸς λογίζεται δικαιοσύνην  
χωρὶς ἔργων,

10 7 Μακάριοι (εἰσὶ) ὧν ἀφέθησαν αἱ ἀνομίαι  
καὶ

Ps. 32:1-2

ὧν ἐπεκαλύφθησαν αἱ ἁμαρτίαι·

11 8 μακάριός (ἐστὶν) ἄνθρωπος  
οὗ οὐ μὴ λογίσσεται κύριος ἁμαρτίαν.

9 οὖν  
12 ὁ μακαρισμὸς (ἐστὶν) οὗτος  
ἐπὶ τὴν περιτομὴν  
ἢ καὶ  
ἐπὶ τὴν ἀκροβυστίαν;  
13 γάρ  
λέγομεν,  
Ἐλογίσθη τῷ Ἀβραάμ ἡ πίστις  
εἰς δικαιοσύνην.  
10 οὖν  
14 πῶς ἐλογίσθη;  
15 (ἐλογίσθη;)  
ἐν περιτομῇ  
ὄντι  
ἢ  
ἐν ἀκροβυστίᾳ;  
16 (ἐλογίσθη) οὐκ  
ἐν περιτομῇ  
ἀλλ'  
17 (ἐλογίσθη)  
ἐν ἀκροβυστίᾳ  
11 καὶ  
18 σημεῖον ἔλαβεν περιτομῆς  
σφραγίδα  
τῆς δικαιοσύνης  
τῆς πίστεως  
τῆς ἐν τῇ ἀκροβυστίᾳ,  
εἰς τὸ εἶναι αὐτὸν πατέρα  
πάντων τῶν πιστευόντων  
δι' ἀκροβυστίας,  
εἰς τὸ λογισθῆναι... τὴν δικαιοσύνην  
καὶ αὐτοῖς,  
καὶ  
12 ----- πατέρα περιτομῆς  
τοῖς οὐκ ἐκ περιτομῆς μόνον  
ἀλλὰ καὶ  
τοῖς στοιχοῦσιν  
τοῖς ἴχνεσιν  
ἐν ἀκροβυστίᾳ  
τῆς... πίστεως

13

γὰρ

διὰ νόμου

19 Οὐ... (ἔστιν) ἡ ἐπαγγελία

τῷ Ἀβραάμ

ἢ

τῷ σπέρματι αὐτοῦ,

τὸ κληρονόμον αὐτὸν εἶναι κόσμου,

ἀλλὰ

20 (ἔστιν ἡ ἐπαγγελία)

διὰ δικαιοσύνης πίστεως.

14

γὰρ

εἰ οἱ ἐκ νόμου κληρονόμοι,

21 κεκένωται ἡ πίστις

καὶ

22 κατήργηται ἡ ἐπαγγελία·

15

γὰρ

23 ὁ νόμος ὀργὴν κατεργάζεται

δὲ

οὐδὲ οὐκ ἔστιν νόμος

24 οὐδὲ (ἔστιν) παράβασις.

16

διὰ τοῦτο

ἐκ πίστεως,

25 (ἔστιν ἡ ἐπαγγελία)

ἵνα (ἡ ἐπαγγελία ἦ)

κατὰ χάριν,

εἰς τὸ εἶναι βεβαίαν τὴν ἐπαγγελίαν παντὶ τῷ σπέρματι,

οὐ τῷ ἐκ τοῦ νόμου μόνον

ἀλλὰ καὶ

τῷ ἐκ πίστεως Ἀβραάμ,

ὅς ἐστιν πατὴρ πάντων ἡμῶν,

καθὼς---γέγραπται

/-----|

ὅτι Πατέρα πολλῶν ἐθνῶν τέθεικά σε,

κατέναντι οὗ

ἐπίστευσεν θεοῦ

/-----|

τοῦ ζοφοιοῦντος τοὺς νεκροὺς

καὶ

καλοῦντος τὰ μὴ ὄντα

ὡς ὄντα·

18

παρ' ἐλπίδα

ἐπ' ἐλπίδι

ὅς...ἐπίστευσεν

εἰς τὸ γενέσθαι αὐτὸν

πατέρα

πολλῶν

ἔθνῶν

κατὰ τὸ εἰρημένον,

/-----|

Οὕτως ἔσται τὸ σπέρμα σου,

19

καὶ

μὴ ἀσθενήσας τῇ πίστει

26 κατενόησεν τὸ ἑαυτοῦ σῶμα ἤδη νενεκρωμένον,  
ἑκατονταετῆς που ὑπάρχων,

καὶ

27 ----- τὴν νέκρωσιν τῆς μήτρας Σάρρας·

20

δὲ

εἰς τὴν ἐπαγγελίαν τοῦ θεοῦ

28 οὐ διεκρίθη

τῇ ἀπιστίᾳ

ἀλλ’

29 ἐνεδυναμώθη

τῇ πίστει,

δοὺς δόξαν τῷ θεῷ

21

καὶ

πληροφορηθεῖς

ὃ ἐπήγγελται

ὅτι...δυνατός ἐστὶν καὶ ποιῆσαι.

22

διὸ

καὶ

30 ἐλογίσθη αὐτῷ

εἰς δικαιοσύνην.

23

δὲ

31 Οὐκ ἐγράφη

δι’ αὐτὸν

μόνον

ὅτι ἐλογίσθη αὐτῷ

24

ἀλλὰ

καὶ

32 (ἐγράφη)

δι’ ἡμᾶς,

οἷς μέλλει λογίζεσθαι,

τοῖς πιστεύουσιν

ἐπὶ τὸν ἐγείραντα Ἰησοῦν τὸν κύριον ἡμῶν

ἐκ νεκρῶν,

25

ὃς παρεδόθη

διὰ τὰ παραπτώματα

ἡμῶν

καὶ

-- ἠγέρθη

διὰ τὴν δικαίωσιν

ἡμῶν.

## Semantic Diagram

I.	v.1			Οὖν (draws implication from 3:21-31) <b>1</b> Pres-Act-Ind-1-P-ἡμεῖς-Question
	v.2			γὰρ <b>1st explanatory defense of #1</b> <b>2</b> Pres-Act-Ind-3-S-Ἀβραάμ-Dec (1st Cond)
		a)		ἀλλ' Amplifies by neg contrast #2 <b>3</b> (Pres-Act-Ind-3-S-Ἀβραάμ-Dec)
	v.3			γὰρ Defense of above 2 statements <b>4</b> Pres-Act-Ind-3-S-ἡ γραφή -Question
		1.		δὲ part of Gen 15:6 quote answering ques <b>5</b> 1Aor-Act-Ind-3-S-Ἀβραάμ-Dec
		b)		καὶ links two scripture declarations <b>6</b> 1Aor-Pass-Ind-3-S-(ἡπίστις)-Dec
	v.4			δε Introduces commentary on Gen 15:6 <b>7</b> Pres-Pass-Ind-3-S-ὁ μισθός-Dec
		A.		ἀλλὰ Contrast elipsis w. prep phrase emphasis <b>8</b> (Pres-Pass-Ind-3-S-ὁ μισθός-Dec)
	v.5			δε Amplifies #7 <b>9</b> 1Aor-Pass-Ind-3-S-ἡπίστις αὐτοῦ-Dec
		a)		
	v.6			
	v.7			<b>10</b> Beautitude quote from Ps. 32:1-2 καὶ
	v.8			<b>11</b> Beautitude quote from Ps. 32:1-2
	v.9			Οὖν Draws implication from #s 9-11 <b>12</b> (Pres-Ind-3-S-οὗτος-Dec)
		2.		γὰρ Explanatory use <b>13</b> Pres-Act-Ind-1-P-(ἡμεῖς)-Dec
	v.10			Οὖν Raises implication of #13 <b>14</b> 1Aor-Pass-Ind-3-S-(Ἀβραάμ)-Question
		b)		
II.				<b>15</b> 1Aor-Pass-Ind-3-S-(Ἀβραάμ)-Question 2 ---
				<b>16</b> 1Aor-Pass-Ind-3-S-(Ἀβραάμ)-Answer - ἀλλ'
				<b>17</b> 1Aor-Pass-Ind-3-S-(Ἀβραάμ)-Answer + καὶ Adds second argument to above #s14-18
	v.11			<b>18</b> 2Aor-Act-Ind-3-S-(Ἀβραάμ)-Dec
		1.		γὰρ <b>2nd explanatory defense of #1</b>
	v.12			<b>19</b> (Pres-Ind-3-S-ἡ ἐπαγγελία-Dec) -
	v.13			ἀλλὰ Contrast οὐ...ἀλλά
				<b>20</b> (Pres-Ind-3-S-ἡ ἐπαγγελία-Dec) +
	v.14			γὰρ Explanatory defense of #s 19-20
		a)		<b>21</b> Perf-Pass-Ind-3-S-ἡπίστις-Dec
				καὶ Add second argument
		B.		<b>22</b> Perf-Pass-Ind-3-S-ἡ ἐπαγγελία-Dec
	v.15			γὰρ Introduces explanatory defense of #s 21-22

III.

			23	Pres-Dep-Ind-3-S-ὁ νόμος-Dec
	2.	---		δὲ Adds second defense statement
			24	(Pres-Ind-3-S-παράβασις-Dec)
v.16				διὰ τοῦτο Sets preceding as reason for fol
			25	(Pres-Ind-3-S-ἡ ἐπαγγελία-Dec): key #
vv.17-19				καὶ Adds further elaboration
	b)	---	26	1Aor-Act-Ind-3-S-(Ἄβραάμ)-Dec
				καὶ Adds second declaration
			27	[1Aor-Act-Ind-3-S-(Ἄβραάμ)-Dec]
v.20		---		δὲ introduces next set of assertions
			28	1Aor-Dep-Ind-3-S-(Ἄβραάμ)-Dec
				ἀλλ' οὐ...ἀλλά contrast
			29	1Aor-Pass-Ind-3-S-(Ἄβραάμ)-Dec
vv.21-22				διὸ (applies to believers)
	A.	---	30	1Aor-Pass-Ind-3-S-(ἠπίστις)-Dec (key)
v.23				δὲ adds 2nd set of assertions
	1.	---	31	1Aor-Pass-Ind-3-S-Scripture Quote- Dec
v.24B.		---		ἀλλὰ οὐ μόνον...ἀλλά καὶ contrast
v.25	2.	---	32	[1Aor-Pass-Ind-3-S-Scripture Quote- Dec]