

Abraham's Faith in the Promise of God

Romans 4.13-25

Read Romans 4:13-25

1. God promised "to Abraham or to his descendants that he would be heir of the world" (v. 13). Read Genesis 22:17-18; Galatians 3:16, 29; and Romans 8:16-17. Explain what God's promise to Abraham means.
2. Promises are usually based upon a condition. For example, we may say, "I promise that I will give you \$30 if you will clean my house." From verse 13, what condition is the promise of God *not* based on? What is it based on?
3. From verse 14, if the promise of God was based upon the Law, what would that make faith and God's promise?
4. A promise is nullified if the person the promise is given to can not possibly do what the promise is based on. If I promised to give you \$30 to clean the world, it would be a silly promise. Such would be the promise of God if it were based on the Law. We cannot possibly keep it, and so His promise would be void. The Law has another purpose rather than bringing salvation. What does the Law bring? What happens when there is no Law?

5. Read Romans 7:7-11. The Law shows us how utterly sinful we are and how much we deserve God's wrath. Therefore, it drives us to God to beg for mercy. But we also know from general revelation that men are sinners because they have suppressed the truth. How then could it be said that "where there is no law, there also is no violation?" (v. 15)

6. Paul describes God as one who "gives life to the dead and calls into being that which does not exist" (v. 17). Why do you think that Paul draws attention to these truths about God in this passage?

7. What does it mean that Abraham hoped against hope in verse 18? (Also see verse 19).

8. About how old was Abraham when God promised him that he would have a son? Read Genesis 17:15-22. How old was Sarah? Was it biologically possible for them to have children? How does this relate to your answer under question 7?

9. In Genesis 17 and 18 we see that both Abraham and Sarah “laughed” when God promised them a son. How does this harmonize with verse 20 and the fact that Abraham “did not waver in unbelief but grew strong in faith?”

10. Verse 20 records that by growing strong in faith, Abraham gave “glory to God.” How can you give “glory to God” through your faith?

11. What was Abraham fully assured of in verse 21?

12. For whose sake was the story of Abraham and the fact that righteousness was credited to Him written down?

13. Verses 24-25 conclude the case of justification by focusing on what Jesus did. How can individuals such as you and me be granted a right standing with God?

14. Below is the text of Romans 4:13-25. Circle every word or phrase in this passage that describes what God has done. Underline every word or phrase in this passage that describes something that Abraham did. With all of these taken together, how do they apply to you and your relationship with God?
- 13 For the promise to Abraham or to his descendants that he would be heir of the world was not through the Law, but through the righteousness 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.
- 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.