



### Abraham believed God – 4:17-21

- Romans 4:3-8 – faith alone – apart from works
- Romans 4:9-12 – faith alone – apart from circumcision
- Romans 4:13-16 – Promise through faith not law
- Romans 4:17-21 - Abraham believed God
- (as it is written, “A father of many nations have I made you)
  - This is a quote from Genesis 17:5
  - This quote is confirming the end of verse 16 – who is the father of us all, because it is written, ‘a father of many nations have I made you’
  - I have made you - to place, appoint – perfect, indicative, active
- In the sight of him whom he believed, even God,
  - ‘him’ and ‘even’ are not in the Greek
  - In the sight (before), whom he believed, God
  - ‘before’ or ‘in the sight of’ with reference to a person (cf. 2 Cor. 2:17 & 12:19)
  - Abraham believed while in the sight of God or in God’s presence
    - Believed – aorist, active, indicative
  - Before/In the sight of/in the presence of God he believed ‘in God’
    - God was the object of his faith



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- God who gives life to the dead and calls into being that which does not exist
  - Literally - calling things not being, being and making alive, dead ones
  - God who gives life to the dead (3 ideas here)
    - Immediate context – the deadness of Abrahams body and the deadness of Sarah’s womb
      - Abraham believed in God who was able to produce a child from Abraham and Sarah even though there bodies were considered dead in relation to child bearing
    - Omnipotence of God –
      - Deut 32:39 and 1 Samuel 2:6
      - God able to raise Isaac from the dead. Hebrews 11:17-19
    - Gives spiritual life to the spiritual dead.
      - For those who believe in God, He takes mankind, dead in their trespasses and sin and makes then alive unto God in Christ Jesus and dead unto sin.



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- God who calls into being that which does not exist (3 ideas here)
  - Calling into being the promise to Abraham which did not yet exist
  - The verb ‘call’ in the OT often refers to God’s creative work
    - God called the creation into existence – Genesis 1
    - Calling forth the generations from the beginning – Isaiah 41:4
  - God spiritually calls people unto Himself
    - God brings about spiritual life in believers where spiritual life did not exist – Romans 8:28-30
- In hope against hope he believed
  - Hope – expectation of good, joyful and confident expectation
    - ἐπίστευσεν – episteusen - He believed – aorist, active, indicative - aorist indicating that it happened in the past
      - πίστεύω – pisteuoo – believe - used 246 times in the NT, 236 times it is in the active voice (the subject is performing the action)
  - Confident expectation of faith in God not in the circumstances.
    - Faith not based on feelings, possibilities or probabilities
    - Hebrews 11:8-12



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- He believed, in order that he might become a father of many nations,
  - γενέσθαι – genesthai – might become - aorist, middle, infinitive (to become oneself)
  - It appears that becoming a father of many nations is dependent upon his faith? This would compromise the unconditional Abrahamic covenant?
  - "Abraham's hope rested solely on God's promise. He had no hope of obtaining descendants naturally. His faith was not a condition for the reception of the promise, but he believed with the intention of receiving it." Mounce
  - God chose him, a man of faith, to make the covenant/agreement with.
  - He believed, and this belief was with the confident expectation of receiving it based on the faithfulness of God.
- So shall your descendents be
  - Quote from Genesis 15:5



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- Without becoming weak in faith
  - He did not weaken in faith when he considered his circumstances
  - He looked at his circumstances from a perspective of faith in God therefore his circumstances did not overwhelm him.
- Contemplated/considered his own body and Sarah
  - His own body now as good as dead
    - Dead – perfect, passive participle – perfect meaning an existing state of affairs – the existing state of his body in relation to producing children was dead. Around 100 years old
    - Despite contemplating his own body, he continued in faith
  - Sarah was barren – womb as dead
  - There is nothing in their circumstances to cause them to believe in the promise that God made
  - All the indicators pointed to the opposite of the fulfillment of the promise, it is humanly impossible for the promise to come true based on their physical condition.
  - But remember what is impossible with man is possible with God



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- With respect to the promise of God he did not waver in unbelief
  - Looking rather to God's promise he did not waver.  
διεκρίθη – diekrithee – waver - aorist, passive, indicative – to be at variance with oneself, doubt, hesitate
  - Because Abraham knew of the faithfulness of God he did not doubt or hesitate regarding the promise. He knew that God was able to do what he said he would. (4:21)
  - Doubting, wavering or hesitating would have been unbelief
  - Does this mean that Abraham always walked by faith and believed in God?
    - No, he was a sinful man like everyone else, but as a whole his mindset and heart attitude was one of dependency, faith and trust in the Lord.
- But grew strong in faith
  - ἐνεδυναμώθη – enedumanoothee - Aorist, passive, indicative – passive meaning the action was being done to him – he was strengthened by God in relation to his faith
  - What does it mean to have ones faith strengthened?



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- Giving glory to God
  - Because of God's faithfulness and his faith being strengthened by God he was giving glory to God.
  - In contrast to the those who didn't in Romans 4:21
- And being fully assured/persuaded
  - πληροφορηθεῖς – pleerofooretheis – aorist, passive, participle, God was the one who was assuring him or persuading him
  - Idea of a completion of a business transaction – fill with certainty
- That what He had promised, He was able also to perform



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- What are the impossible circumstances in our lives?
- Do we in hope against hope believe in what God has said to be true?
  - Blessed with every spiritual blessing (Ephesians 1:3)
  - Accepted in the beloved (Ephesians 1:6)
  - Co-heirs with Christ (Ephesians 2:6)
  - Dead unto sin and alive unto God (Romans 6:11)
  - Always victorious through Christ (1 Cor. 15:57)
  - He has given us everything pertaining to life and godliness (2 Peter 1:3)
  - The peace of God (Phil. 4:7)
- Without being weak in faith, do we consider our own bodies as dead, our sin nature has been crucified with Christ and have been given a new nature?
- Do we doubt the promises of God in unbelief or is our faith being strengthened by God?
- Are we giving all the glory to God?