

Romans 4b

13 God spoke to Abraham, son, and grandson telling them they were going to inherit the land because of Abraham's obedience. It wasn't obedience to the law for there was none. It was obedient righteousness credited to his account through faith. If you read his life it isn't full of obedience until the end, but the promises were his before he was 100. Promises are received by faith. Faith evidences its existence by action. You cannot have faith and it not affect your outward life. We act on our beliefs. That is not works, it is evidence of a real exchange, our sin for His righteousness. "heir of the world" not just the boundaries of Israel. Genesis 17:4-5 The meek shall inherit the earth. (Matthew 5:5) We will rule and reign with Christ. Galatians 3:16-18

14 If just keeping the rules makes them/us an heir of the promise, who needs faith? Where is the connection then of the promise and faith? God didn't ask Abraham to do something. He asked for a believing heart. If it is by obeying the Law, you don't need to be a child of Abraham, you just need to keep a set of rules. Call that a child of Moses. Paul is fleshing out the implications of the prevailing Jewish thought with its overemphasis on keeping the minute details of the Law. Galatians 2:21, 3:18

15 He has shown that all break the Law. The Law carries within it the judgment for those who do not keep it - wrath. If, however, we go to the other extreme and throw out the Law, no one needs redemption because there is no breaking of the Law. John 15:22

16 Since no one can keep it and are all therefore under a sentence of wrath, and we cannot do away with the Law, faith in the grace of God is required. That covers Jew and Gentile, making us all one. This may be the key message in the first 4 chapters of Romans - Jew and Gentile are one because both are under the curse of sin and both come to God by faith. Galatians 3:7-12; Romans 9:8

17 (Genesis 17:5) Many, not just Edom and Israel. The God who speaks things into existence is our God. He gave you and me life when we placed our faith in Him. We were not a people, a family, but now we are one body. He sees Abraham as the father of Nations that believe. Korea, Nigeria, Argentina...those who place their faith in Him. Matthew 3:9

18 Genesis 15:5 Against all hope, the barren bodies of Abraham and Sarah could only produce life by faith in the life giving Spirit of God. Isaac was a son of faith, not physical ability. He is a picture of us who are made sons not by our abilities but by faith. He looked up at the stars and believed that his offspring would be as numerous. Mark 5:35-36

19 Faith doesn't believe by ignoring the facts, it believes in spite of the contrary facts. "I don't know how, but God said it, so I believe it!" Mark 9:23-24

20 The visible did not discourage him. He looked at the unseen God and was strengthened in his faith. Thank God the Bible is honest about Abraham. In earlier years, he did not have this strong a faith. He trusted in half-truths (Sarah is my sister), in a younger body (having a son through Hagar), in his own sense of what was right (bringing his family with him from Ur). He went through his doubts and own ways but learned from them that what God says is trustworthy. He quit looking at the things men look at and trusted God, so his faith was strengthened.

21 Are you fully persuaded that God can do (is able to do) what He promised? Do you remember looking at your lifeless body and believing that God could make you a new creation in Him? At that time if someone said you would father children of faith (believers) you probably would have laughed with Sarah. If we are faithless, yet He remains faithful. Be FULLY PERSUADED! God has the power to do what He promises. Hebrews 11:6,19; 2Timothy 1:12

22-24 And it will be credited to you as righteousness. Have you learned that what God says to you is dependable? Abraham had a personal relationship with God. 1Peter 1:21

25 Another one sentence gospel. It all hangs on our faith in this incredible, glorious act. God made a way to justify us by laying our sins on Jesus who suffered the penalty in our place. Do you have faith in what He did? Then His righteousness is credited to your account. How undeserving we are! How gracious our Lord! This is the Good News! He was raised to life for our justification. The resurrection is just as important as the death for sin. 1Corinthians 15:17 The price was paid, but victory was attained. Don't leave the groceries behind after the bill has been paid. Take them home with you. The wages of sin was death - paid in full. But then we must walk in newness of life, right with God, access to His presence. Raised for our justification, but His blood shed is what justifies, see 5:9. It is not one or the other but the whole process. Resurrection shows the sacrifice was accepted. Dead to sin would be of no use if we were not raised to newness of life. 1 Peter 2:24