

# Romans

## Abraham Justified by Faith [4:1-25]

### • Faith Credited as Righteousness [4:1-5]

- What then shall we say that Abraham, our physical ancestor, has discovered?  
Τί οὖν ἐροῦμεν εὐρηκέναι Ἀβραὰμ τὸν προπάτορα ἡμῶν κατὰ σάρκα;
  - Here we have another of Paul's uses of the phrase "what shall we say" to highlight a point of significance or a potential opposing view.
  - Paul describes Abraham as "our forefather according to the flesh".
  - This distinguishes Abraham's physical ancestry from his spiritual fatherhood [4:11-12, 16].
  - The phrase "has found" is from εὐρίσκω (heuriskō) which means "find", "discover" or "come upon".
  - Given the context, this question has to do with Abraham discovering a way to earn righteousness.
- For if we assume that Abraham was justified as a result of works, he has a reason for bragging,  
εἰ γὰρ Ἀβραὰμ ἐξ ἔργων ἐδικαιώθη, ἔχει καύχημα,
  - The "if" in this verse is a 1<sup>st</sup> class conditional.
  - This is interesting because the statement that follows is not true, but Paul is making an argument based on the false assumption that it is true.
  - The phrase "by works" is ἐξ ἔργων (ex ergōn) which literally means "from works".
  - As in Rom 3:30 with the phrase "by faith" the meaning here is "as a result of works".
  - The phrase "something to boast about" is καύχημα (kauchēma) which means "a source of pride".
  - The best way to translate this word here is "a reason for bragging".
- but he cannot brag to God. For what does the Scripture say?  
ἀλλ' οὐ πρὸς θεόν. τί γὰρ ἡ γραφή λέγει;
  - The phrase "not before God" is literally "not to God".
  - Paul is saying that Abraham cannot brag to God because he did not earn his justification.
  - As we have seen before (and will see again) Paul uses O.T. Scripture to show why the assumption he proposed is erroneous.
- "ABRAHAM BELIEVED GOD, AND IT WAS CREDITED TO HIM AS RIGHTEOUSNESS."  
ἐπίστευσεν δὲ Ἀβραὰμ τῷ θεῷ καὶ ἐλογίσθη αὐτῷ εἰς δικαιοσύνην.
  - Here we have a quote of Gen 15:6 from the LXX.
  - One minor difference is that Gen 15:6 in the LXX begins with καὶ (kai) and this verse has the conjunction δὲ (de) which is untranslated.
  - Another minor difference is that Gen 15:6 in the LXX has Ἀβραὰμ (Abram) and this verse has Ἀβραὰμ (Abra'am = Abraham).
  - In Gen 15 his name was still Abram [Gen 15:3].

- The word “believed” is from πιστεύω (pisteuō) which means “believe”, “believe in” or “trust”.
- This is the verb form of the noun πίστις (pistis) which is the word “faith”.
- The word “credited” is from λογίζομαι (logizomai) which means “reckon”, “calculate” or “consider”.
- Here this word is used in the sense of “reckon” as in reckoning (crediting) to one’s account.
- This is an important word in Romans chapter four as it occurs eleven times throughout the chapter [Rom 4:3, 4, 5, 6, 8, 9, 10, 11, 22, 23, 24].
- Now to the one who works, his compensation is not credited as a favor, but as what is due.
 

τῷ δὲ ἐργαζομένῳ ὁ μισθὸς οὐ λογίζεται κατὰ χάριν ἀλλὰ κατὰ ὀφείλημα,

  - The phrase “the one who works” refers to any person working for compensation.
  - This would include a person working to earn righteousness (justification) before God.
  - The word “wage” is μισθὸς (misthos) which means “pay”, “wages” or “compensation”.
  - To properly communicate Paul’s argument here, the translation “compensation” is best.
  - The word “favor” is from χάρις (charis) which means “grace” or “favor”.
  - This word describes something given without being earned or deserved and with no implied obligation.
  - The phrase “what is due” is ὀφείλημα (opheilēma) which means “debt” or “obligation”.
  - This word describes that which is owed to someone.
- But to the one who does not work, but believes in Him who justifies the ungodly,
 

τῷ δὲ μὴ ἐργαζομένῳ πιστεύοντι δὲ ἐπὶ τὸν δικαιῶντα τὸν ἀσεβῆ

  - Paul now switches to the “the one who does not work” to give the other side of his argument.
  - In the place of works, this person believes (πιστεύω, pisteuō) as Abraham did.
  - The phrase “Him who justifies” is a participle that literally means “the justifier of”.
  - This is a reference to the Father [Rom 3:26] who is also the object of our faith [John 5:24; 6:29; 12:44].
  - The word “ungodly” is from ἀσεβής (asebēs) which means “irreverent” or “ungodly”.
  - This word refers to someone that is outside of a proper relationship with God – an unbeliever.
- his faith is credited as righteousness,
 

λογίζεται ἡ πίστις αὐτοῦ εἰς δικαιοσύνην·

  - Here we have an analogous phrase to what we saw quoted from the LXX in verse 3, only in the present tense as opposed to the past tense.
  - Any person who believes today as Abraham believed will have righteousness credited to his account just as Abraham did.

- Principles of Romans 4:1-5
  - There are those who believe that we are saved through our works.
  - Some even argue that we are saved by grace through faith today, but the people in the O.T. times had to earn their salvation through works.
  - Paul decimates that argument by showing that Abraham himself was saved based on his faith.
  - Abraham was not saved through his works, but instead believed God and his faith was credited to his “account” as righteousness [Gal 3:5-6].
  - His faith did not produce this righteousness: God credited righteousness to him based on his faith.
  - Any system of works is, by definition, incompatible with grace [Rom 11:6].
  - Working results in a recompense of payment due the worker [Lev 19:13; Deut 24:15; Jas 5:4].
  - Grace involves giving without obligation and apart from any merit on the part of the recipient.
  - Believing in Jesus Christ is explicitly described as not being an activity of works [Eph 2:8-9].
  - Thus, believing in Jesus Christ is non-meritorious which means righteousness is neither earned nor deserved, but is credited to the one who believes.
  - Upon receiving this free gift of righteousness, a believer is justified in God’s sight [Rom 3:26].
  - Righteousness and justification are essential components of God’s salvation grace blessings.

- **David's Assertion [4:6-8]**

- just as David also speaks of the proclamation of blessing on the man to whom God credits righteousness independent of works:

καθάπερ καὶ Δαυὶδ λέγει τὸν μακαρισμὸν τοῦ ἀνθρώπου ᾧ ὁ θεὸς λογίζεται δικαιοσύνην χωρὶς ἔργων·

- The word “blessing” is from μακαρισμός (makarismos).
- This word describes a proclamation of special favor upon someone.
- Here Paul reiterates that righteousness is credited *to the person* independent of works [v. 3].
- “BLESSED ARE THOSE WHOSE TRANSGRESSIONS HAVE BEEN FORGIVEN, AND WHOSE SINS HAVE BEEN COVERED.”

μακάριοι ὧν ἀφέθησαν αἱ ἀνομίαι καὶ ὧν ἐπεκαλύφθησαν αἱ ἁμαρτίαι·

- Paul makes his case with a quote from Ps 32:1 in the LXX.
- The word “blessed” is from μακάριος (makarios) which means “blessed”, “fortunate” or “happy”.
- The phrase “lawless deeds” is ἀνομίαι (anomia) which is essentially the same as “transgressions” which means violations of law.
- The phrase “have been forgiven” is from ἀφήμι (aphiēmi) which means “cancel out”, “pardon” or “forgive”.
- The phrase “have been covered” is from ἐπικαλύπτω (epikalupto) which means “cover up” or “cover over”.
- This is the language of the atonement which was God’s grace provision for believers who lived before Jesus Christ went to the cross.
- “BLESSED IS THE MAN WHOSE SIN THE LORD WILL ABSOLUTELY NOT TAKE INTO ACCOUNT.”

μακάριος ἀνὴρ οὗ οὐ μὴ λογίσηται κύριος ἁμαρτίαν·

- The phrase “will not” is οὐ μὴ (ou mē) which is literally back-to-back negatives.
- In English this would result in a positive statement, but in Greek this is the strongest possible negative.
- The phrase “take into account” is from λογίζομαι (logizomai) which is the word for “credit”.
- Just as righteousness is credited to our account, sin is cleared from our account.

- Principles of Romans 4:6-8
  - The testimony of the O.T. from Abraham to David illustrate that salvation is by grace through faith.
  - God has designed blessings (a joyful state of mind) for those who believe [Matt 5:3-12].
  - Believers can have this joyful state of mind in any circumstance [Ps 1:1; 32:1-2; 34:8; 40:4; 41:1; 84:4-5; 94:12; 106:3; 112:1; 119:1-2; 128:1-2].
  - Because our sins have been reckoned to the Lord Jesus Christ's account and eternally judged in Him [Isa 53:4-6] they are no longer reckoned against our account [2 Cor 5:18-19].
  - This opens the door for God to reckon His righteousness to our account the moment we place our faith in His Son [Rom 3:21-22; 4:5].
  - These two truths are intertwined and inseparable because both are necessary for our salvation.
  - Merely not having sins be reckoned to our account is not enough – we need the righteousness of God credited to our account to be capable of being in His presence in heaven.

## • Faith, not Circumcision [4:9-12]

- Is this proclamation of blessing then on the circumcised, or on the uncircumcised also?  
Ὁ μακαρισμὸς οὖν οὗτος ἐπὶ τὴν περιτομὴν ἢ καὶ ἐπὶ τὴν ἀκροβυστίαν;
  - The word “blessing” is μακαρισμός (makarismos) which we saw in verse 6 to mean “proclamation of blessing”.
  - Paul uses the terms “circumcised” and “uncircumcised” to refer to Jews and Gentiles here.
  - However, given the verses which follow the actual physical circumcision is also in view.
- For we say: Faith was credited to Abraham as righteousness.  
λέγομεν γάρ· ἐλογίσθη τῷ Ἀβραάμ ἡ πίστις εἰς δικαιοσύνην.
  - This phrase in the 2<sup>nd</sup> half of verse 9 is not a quote of Gen 15:6 from either the Hebrew or Greek texts.
  - This should be treated as a statement that Paul and others were making regarding this doctrine.
- How then was it credited? While he was circumcised, or uncircumcised?  
πῶς οὖν ἐλογίσθη; ἐν περιτομῇ ὄντι ἢ ἐν ἀκροβυστίᾳ;
  - Paul now asked two rhetorical questions for his readers to consider.
  - The terms “circumcised/uncircumcised” clearly refer to Abraham’s physical circumcision here.
- Not while circumcised, but while uncircumcised;  
οὐκ ἐν περιτομῇ ἀλλ’ ἐν ἀκροβυστίᾳ.
  - Paul answers his questions with what would have been a stunning statement at the time.
  - Abraham was uncircumcised (like a Gentile) when his faith was credited to him as righteousness.
- and he received the sign of circumcision, an attestation of the righteousness credited on the basis of the faith which he had while uncircumcised,  
καὶ σημεῖον ἔλαβεν περιτομῆς σφραγίδα τῆς δικαιοσύνης τῆς πίστεως τῆς ἐν τῇ ἀκροβυστίᾳ,
  - Paul then reminds his readers that circumcision is merely symbolic – a sign [Gen 17:10-11].
  - The word “seal” is from σφραγίς (sphragis) which means “seal”, “signet”, “mark” or “attestation”.
  - This word means “attestation” here.
  - The phrase “the righteousness of the faith” refers to the righteousness credited on the basis of faith, not righteousness attributed to the faith itself.
- to the end that he might be the father of all who believe without being circumcised,  
εἰς τὸ εἶναι αὐτὸν πατέρα πάντων τῶν πιστευόντων δι’ ἀκροβυστίας,
  - The phrase “so that” is the preposition εἰς (eis) which means “to” or “toward”.
  - This word is used in the sense of “to the end that” here.
  - The word “father” is from πατήρ (patēr) which means “father” or “parent”.
  - This word is used in the sense of spiritual fatherhood here.
  - The first aspect of this spiritual fatherhood is for all uncircumcised (Gentile) people who believe.

- to the end that righteousness might be credited to them also,  
 εἰς τὸ λογισθῆναι [καὶ] αὐτοῖς [τὴν] δικαιοσύνην,
  - The word “that” is the preposition εἰς (eis) which means “to” or “toward”.
  - Once again, this word is used in the sense of “to the end that” here.
  - The untranslated Greek word καὶ (kai) is not in all of the manuscripts, but likely was in the original.
  - In this context it would mean “also” which makes sense in Paul’s development of this doctrine.
- and the father of the circumcised to those who not only are of the circumcision,  
 καὶ πατέρα περιτομῆς τοῖς οὐκ ἐκ περιτομῆς μόνον
  - The phrase “the father of circumcision” describes Abraham’s fatherhood over those who are circumcised – the Jewish people.
  - The phrase “of the circumcision” refers to everyone who is born a Jew.
- but who also follow in the footsteps of the faith of our father Abraham which he had while uncircumcised.  
 ἀλλὰ καὶ τοῖς στοιχοῦσιν τοῖς ἴχνεσιν τῆς ἐν ἀκροβυστίᾳ πίστεως τοῦ πατρὸς ἡμῶν Ἀβραάμ.
  - The phrase “follow in the steps” is similar to the phrase Paul uses in 2 Cor 12:18 which means to follow the same course of action.
  - The phrase “our father Abraham” refers to his spiritual fatherhood as opposed to the fatherhood of the flesh referred to in Rom 4:1.
- Principles of Romans 4:9-12
  - Circumcision is one of the two signs that the people of Israel received to indicate their position under the Abrahamic Covenant [Ex 31:13-17].
  - Circumcision is not required for a person to be saved [Acts 15:1-11; Eph 2:8-9].
  - Abraham himself was uncircumcised when he believed and was justified [Gen 15:6 cf. 17:23].
  - Because of his faith, Abraham is considered the spiritual father of all those who believe – Jews and Gentiles alike [Rom 4:16; Gal 3:7].
  - Abraham is the natural father to all Jews, but the spiritual father to the Jews who follow his footsteps and believe in God’s promises – in particular, the promised Messiah, Jesus of Nazareth.

- **Faith in God’s Promise [4:13-22]**

- For the promise to Abraham or to his descendants that he would be heir of the world was not *fulfilled* through the Law,  
Οὐ γὰρ διὰ νόμου ἡ ἐπαγγελία τῷ Ἀβραάμ ἢ τῷ σπέρματι αὐτοῦ, τὸ κληρονόμον αὐτὸν εἶναι κόσμου,
  - The word “promise” is ἐπαγγελία (epaggelia) which means “promise” or “pledge”.
  - This word is singular here, but it is a collective noun including the land, seed and blessing promises of the Abrahamic covenant.
  - The word “descendants” is actually “seed” which can refer to Christ [Gal 3:16] as well as the full scope of Abraham’s descendants [Rom 4:16].
  - The phrase “heir of the world” refers to the blessings upon all the families/nations of the earth [Gen 12:3; 18:18].
  - The phrase “through the Law” could mean how the promise was given or how it was fulfilled.
  - Considering the verses that follow, the fulfillment of the promise is in view here.
- but, on the contrary, *it is fulfilled* through the righteousness credited on the basis of faith.  
ἀλλὰ διὰ δικαιοσύνης πίστεως.
  - The word “but” is the conjunction ἀλλὰ (alla) which introduces a sharp contrast with the preceding text.
  - To capture the full meaning of this word, a verbose translation “but, on the contrary,” will be used.
  - The phrase “through the righteousness of faith” speaks of how the promise is fulfilled.
  - As we saw in verse 11, this phrase refers to the righteousness credited on the basis of faith, not righteousness attributed to the faith itself.
- For if we assume that those who are of the Law are heirs, faith has been made worthless and the promise has been nullified;  
εἰ γὰρ οἱ ἐκ νόμου κληρονόμοι, κεκένωται ἡ πίστις καὶ κατήργηται ἡ ἐπαγγελία.
  - The word “if” here is a first class conditional, but we know the statement that follows is not true.
  - This is a similar use to what we saw in Rom 4:2.
  - The phrase “those who are of the Law” refers to Jewish people who lived under the Law.
  - The phrase “made void” is from κενόω (kenoō) which means “empty” or “make void/worthless”.
  - This is the verb in Phil 2:7 regarding Jesus Christ.
  - This verb is in the perfect tense here describing a past completed action with present ongoing results.
  - The word “nullified” is from καταργέω (katargeō) which means “invalidate”, “nullify” or “abolish”.
  - This verb is also in the perfect tense here describing a past completed action with present ongoing results.



- For this reason *it is fulfilled* as a result of faith, in order that *it may be fulfilled* in accordance with grace,  
 Διὰ τοῦτο ἐκ πίστεως, ἵνα κατὰ χάριν,
  - The added phrases “it is” and “it may be” refer to how the promise is fulfilled.
  - The phrase “by faith” is ἐκ πίστεως (ek pisteōs) which means “as a result of faith” here.
  - The phrase “in accordance with grace” excludes any kind of works, including those of the Law.
- to the end that the promise will be guaranteed to all the descendants,  
 εἰς τὸ εἶναι βεβαίαν τὴν ἐπαγγελίαν παντὶ τῷ σπέρματι
  - The phrase “so that” is εἰς (eis) which means “to” or “toward”.
  - This word is used in the sense of “to the end that” here.
  - The word “guaranteed” is from βέβαιος (bebaios) which means “reliable” or “valid”.
  - This word can mean “prove unalterable” or “make certain” [Heb 2:2; 2 Pet 1:10].
  - The phrase “to all the descendants” is an example of how the word “seed” (σπέρματι, spermati) is sometimes used in the plural in this passage.
- not limited to those who are of the Law, but, on the contrary, the promise is indeed guaranteed to those who have the faith of Abraham,  
 οὐ τῷ ἐκ τοῦ νόμου μόνον ἀλλὰ καὶ τῷ ἐκ πίστεως Ἀβραάμ,
  - The word “only” is from μόνος (monos) which means “only” or “alone”.
  - In this context this word is used to speak of the guarantee being limited to a particular group.
  - As we have seen, the phrase “those who are of the Law” refers to Jews who lived under the Law.
  - The phrase “those who are of the faith of Abraham” refers to those who have the same faith.
  - The word “also” is καὶ (kai) which is translated “and” 87% of the time in the NASB.
  - This word can also mean “indeed” [1 Cor 11:8-9; 2 Thess 1:5, ...] and it is used in that sense here.
  - The word “but” is the conjunction ἀλλὰ (alla) which introduces a sharp contrast with the preceding text.
- who is the father of all of us who believe,  
 ὅς ἐστιν πατὴρ πάντων ἡμῶν,
  - Here again, the word “father” speaks of Abraham being the spiritual father of all who believe.
  - The phrase “us all” is literally “all of us” and refers to all who have the faith of Abraham – all believers.

- Principles of Romans 4:13-16
  - Circumcision is the sign of the covenant and the Law provided Israel the operating standard to follow for sanctification, but neither one of these nullified (or even modified) the promises of God.
  - Faith is voided when we reject God's word regarding any aspect of application [Rom 10:17].
  - This principle is true with respect to salvation as well as our daily Christian walk [Col 2:6].
  - God's promises given in His word are eternally true because He is eternally trustworthy [2 Tim 2:13].
  - The Law condemned regarding sin and pointed to something far superior [Rom 3:20; Gal 3:23-25; Heb 7:18-19].
  - Although the Church is not under the Mosaic Law and cannot violate it, we are under the law of Christ [Rom 8:1-4; 1 Cor 9:21; Gal 6:2; Jas 2:8].
  - Faith is a critical element of God's perfect plan which allows for His promises to be accepted on a purely grace basis [Titus 3:5-7].
  - This leaves no room for boasting [1 Cor 4:7].
  - Because God's promise of salvation is on a purely grace basis and is accepted through the meritless mechanism of faith, there are no prerequisites or qualifications to the "whosoever" promises [John 1:12; 3:14-16; 6:40, 47; 11:25-26; 20:31; 1 John 5:1, 11-13].
  - Abraham is the father of all who have this faith.
  - If we are sons of Abraham through faith, then we are heirs according to the promise [Gal 3:29].
  - This does not nullify the promise made to Abraham regarding his physical descendants (who are also regenerate) inheriting the land [Gen 15:18-21].
  - This promise will be fulfilled in the future during the Millennial Kingdom of Christ [Jer 16:14-15; 23:7-8].

- (as it is written, “A FATHER OF MANY NATIONS HAVE I MADE YOU”),  
καθὼς γέγραπται ὅτι πατέρα πολλῶν ἐθνῶν τέθεικά σε,
  - To support his statement about Abraham being the father of believers, Paul quotes Gen 17:5.
  - Abraham is the father of the Jews, Gentile nations [Gen 17:20] and (spiritually) all who believe.
- He is our father in the sight of Him whom he believed: God,  
κατέναντι οὗ ἐπίστευσεν θεοῦ
  - This phrase follows the parenthesis at the beginning of verse 17.
  - This means this is a continuation of the end of verse 16 which says, “Abraham, who is the father of all of us who believe”.
  - The phrase “in the presence of” is κατέναντι (katenanti) which means “in the sight of”.
  - This word means to be in a position before someone of authority, whether visibly present or not [2 Cor 2:17; 12:19].
  - The word “God” is in apposition to the phrase “Him whom he believed” here.
  - The word “even” is not in the Greek and was supplied for clarity, but a simple colon would do.
- who gives life to the dead and calls into existence things which do not exist.  
τοῦ ζωοποιῶντος τοὺς νεκροὺς καὶ καλοῦντος τὰ μὴ ὄντα ὡς ὄντα.
  - The phrase “gives life” is from ζωοποιέω (zōopoieō) which means “make alive” or “give life”.
  - This word is in some key passages regarding our salvation [1 Cor 15:22, 45; 2 Cor 3:6; 1 Pet 3:18].
  - The phrase “calls into being” is literally “calls as existing”.
  - The best way to translate this is “calls into existence”.
  - The word “that” is τὰ (ta) which means “things”.
  - This whole phrase should be translated “things which do not exist”.
  - This description of God and His divine attributes may seem out of place here, but it speaks to what God was able to do for Abraham and Sarah [v. 19].
- Against all hope, in hope he believed, to the end that he might become a father of many nations  
Ὅς παρ’ ἐλπίδα ἐπ’ ἐλπίδι ἐπίστευσεν εἰς τὸ γενέσθαι αὐτὸν πατέρα πολλῶν ἐθνῶν
  - The phrase “against hope” is παρ’ ἐλπίδα (par’ elpida) which means “contrary to hope”.
  - The idea is that Abraham’s situation seemed to inspire no hope.
  - The phrase “in hope he believed” tells us that, even though his situation seemed hopeless, Abraham had hope in God’s promise and believed.
  - The phrase “so that” is the preposition εἰς (eis) which means “to” or “toward” which, again, is used in the sense of “to the end that” here.
  - The phrase “a father of many nations” refers back to the quotation of Gen 17:5 in verse 17.

- according to that which had been spoken, “SO SHALL YOUR DESCENDANTS BE.”  
κατὰ τὸ εἰρημένον· οὕτως ἔσται τὸ σπέρμα σου,
  - Here Paul says “spoken” instead of “written” before quoting Gen 15:5.
  - This calls attention to the fact that these promises had been spoken directly to Abraham.
- Without lacking in faith he contemplated his own body,  
καὶ μὴ ἀσθενήσας τῇ πίστει κατενόησεν τὸ ἑαυτοῦ σῶμα
  - The phrase “becoming weak” is a participle of ἀσθενέω (astheneō) which means “weak” or “sick”.
  - This word can also mean to be lacking something, experiencing need [Acts 20:35].
  - The word “contemplated” is from κατανοέω (katanoeō) which means “notice” or “consider”.
  - This word means to think about something deeply, carefully observing the details [Luke 12:24, 27].
  - Some manuscripts include the negation οὐ (ou) here, but this is likely a scribal error attempting to magnify Abraham’s faith.
  - Paul is stating that Abraham *did* consider his body.
- by this time as good as dead given that he was roughly a hundred years old,  
[ἤδη] νεκρωμένον, ἑκατονταετής που ὑπάρχων,
  - The word “now” is ἤδη (ēdē) which means “now”, “already” or “by this time”.
  - Some manuscripts omit this word, but the best analysis seems to be to include it here.
  - The phrase “as good as dead” is a perfect passive participle of νεκρώω (nekrōō) meaning “having been put to death”.
  - This word is used in the sense of “as good as dead” here and in Heb 11:12.
  - The phrase “since he was” is a participle of ὑπάρχω (huparchō) which means “being”.
  - This word is used in the sense of “given that he was” here.
  - The word “about” is που (pou) which means “about” or “approximately”.
- and the deadness of Sarah’s womb;  
καὶ τὴν νέκρωσιν τῆς μήτρας Σάρρας·
  - The phrase “the deadness of Sarah’s womb” tells us that Abraham thought about the effects of age upon his wife’s body as well.
  - From a human viewpoint perspective, both he and Sarah were too old to have children.
- yet, with respect to the promise of God, he did not doubt in unbelief  
εἰς δὲ τὴν ἐπαγγελίαν τοῦ θεοῦ οὐ διεκρίθη τῇ ἀπιστίᾳ
  - The phrase “with respect to” is εἰς (eis) which means “to” or “toward”.
  - This word is used in the sense of “with regard to” or “with respect to” here.
  - The word “waver” is from διακρίνω (diakrinō) which means “evaluate” or “judge”.
  - This word can mean to be uncertain about something causing doubt [Jas 1:6].

- but became strong in faith, giving glory to God,  
ἀλλ' ἐνεδυναμώθη τῇ πίστει, δούς δόξαν τῷ θεῷ
  - The phrase “grew strong” is from ἐνδυναμόω (endunamoō) which means “strengthen” [Phil 4:13; 1 Tim 1:12; 2 Tim 4:17].
  - Here this word is in the passive voice meaning “be/become strong” [Eph 6:10; 2 Tim 2:1].
  - The word “giving” is a participle of δίδωμι (didōmi) which means “give” or “bestow”.
  - This word is used several times regarding the expression of devotion through giving glory to God [Luke 17:18; John 9:24; Acts 12:23; Rev 4:9].
- and being fully confident that what God had promised, He was able also to accomplish.  
καὶ πληροφορηθεὶς ὅτι ὁ ἐπήγγελται δυνατός ἐστιν καὶ ποιῆσαι.
  - The phrase “being fully assured” is from πληροφορέω (plērophoreō) which means “fulfill” or “convince fully”.
  - In Col 4:12 we translated this “fully confident”.
  - The word “perform” is from ποιέω (poieō) which means “do”, “accomplish” or “bring about”.
  - The best translation here is “accomplish”.
- For this reason IT WAS CREDITED TO HIM AS RIGHTEOUSNESS.  
διὸ [καὶ] ἐλογίσθη αὐτῷ εἰς δικαιοσύνην.
  - The word “Therefore” is διὸ (dio) which means “therefore” or “for this reason”.
  - Given the way Paul has developed this passage, the best translation here is “For this reason”.
  - The word “ALSO” is καὶ (kai) which means “and”, “indeed”, “even” or “also”.
  - This word is not in some of the Greek manuscripts and, given that this is a quote of Gen 15:6 (or Rom 4:3) it likely was a scribal error.

- Principles of Romans 4:17-22
  - God promised that Abraham would be the father of many nations [Gen 17:5].
  - As we have seen, Abraham is the father of many spiritual descendants [Rom 4:16].
  - But the spiritual fulfillment of this promise does not negate the fulfillment through Abraham's physical descendants [Gen 17:20; 25:23; 46:2-3].
  - The guarantee of the fulfillment of God's promises comes in the reality of always being in His sight [Gen 17:7-8; Heb 4:12-13; 1 Thess 1:2-3].
  - Abraham knew God and understood that He would fulfill the promises made to him.
  - Abraham initially thought the promises would be fulfilled through Ishmael [Gen 17:17-18].
  - God corrected Abraham telling him that, although Ishmael would be blessed, he and Sarah would have their very own child a year later who would be the child of the covenant [Gen 17:19-21].
  - When there was no worldly reason to have hope in God's promise because of his (and Sarah's) age, Abraham believed God [Gen 17:22-23].
  - Faith offers us substance when worldly hope has nothing to give [Ezek 37:11-14; Rom 5:1-5; Heb 6:17-20; 11:1].
  - Such faith must always be based upon the Word of God [Rom 10:17; 1 Cor 2:3-5; 1 Thess 2:13].
  - Believers will waver in their faith [Matt 6:28-30; 8:24-27; 9:17-24; John 20:27-29; 1 Cor 16:13].
  - Such wavering subsides as we grow spiritually and our faith is strengthened through an understanding of God's essence, character and nature [1 Cor 1:9; 2 Thess 3:3; Heb 10:23; 11:11-12].
  - When we come to know God we should understand that He will accomplish all that He has promised [Isa 46:10-11; Heb 11:17-19].

## • Faith Credited Today [4:23-25]

- Now not for his benefit only was it written IT WAS CREDITED TO HIM,  
Οὐκ ἐγράφη δὲ δι' αὐτὸν μόνον ὅτι ἐλογίσθη αὐτῷ
  - The phrase “for his sake” is δι' αὐτὸν (di' auton) which means “for the sake/benefit of him”.
  - Given the context regarding faith being credited as righteousness [v. 22] it makes more sense to translate this “for his benefit”.
  - The phrase “it was credited to him” appears to be a quote in the Greek.
  - This is part of the quotation of Gen 15:6 from the LXX, so it likely was a partial quotation by Paul.
- but, on the contrary, for our benefit also, to whom it will certainly be credited,  
ἀλλὰ καὶ δι' ἡμᾶς, οἷς μέλλει λογίζεσθαι,
  - The word “but” is the conjunction ἀλλὰ (alla) which introduces a sharp contrast with the preceding text.
  - To capture the full meaning of this word, a verbose translation “but, on the contrary,” will be used.
  - The phrase “for our sake” is δι' ἡμᾶς (di' hēmas) which means “for the sake/benefit of us”.
  - Like what we did in verse 23 we will translate this “for our benefit”.
  - The phrase “to whom it will be credited” does not indicate that believers today are waiting for this to happen.
  - The “will be” in this phrase is from μέλλω (mellō) which means “will certainly be” here.
- as those who believe upon Him who raised Jesus our Lord from the dead,  
τοῖς πιστεύουσιν ἐπὶ τὸν ἐγείραντα Ἰησοῦν τὸν κύριον ἡμῶν ἐκ νεκρῶν,
  - The word “in” is ἐπὶ (epi) which means “on” or “upon”.
  - Saying our faith is placed upon God places even greater emphasis on the merits of the object.
  - The phrase “believe upon Him who raised Jesus” points to God the Father.
  - Abraham’s faith was upon God the Father and, essentially, ours is as well [John 5:24; 12:44].
- Jesus, who was delivered over because our transgressions were counted against us,  
ὡς παρεδόθη διὰ τὰ παραπτώματα ἡμῶν
  - The word “He” is not in the Greek and was added by the NASB for clarity.
  - Since both the Father and the Son are mentioned in verse 24, we will change this to “Jesus” to be crystal clear.
  - The phrase “delivered over” is from παραδίδομι (paradidōmi) which means “hand over” or “deliver”.
  - This describes the Father delivering over His Son as our substitutionary sacrifice [Rom 8:32].
  - The phrase “because of” is from διὰ (dia) plus the accusative which means “because of”.

- This is causal – the reason Jesus was delivered over by the Father is because our transgressions were a reality already in existence at the cross.
- This was true even for those of us who had not been born yet when Jesus went to the cross because God is omniscient and future events are a present reality for Him.
- The word “transgressions” is from παράπτωμα (paraptōma) which means “wrongdoing” or “sin”.
- The basic meaning of this word is some violation of a moral standard – in this case, God’s righteous standard.
- and was raised because our justification had been accomplished.  
καὶ ἠγέρθη διὰ τὴν δικαίωσιν ἡμῶν.
  - Here we have the exact same construction – διὰ (dia) plus the accusative which means “because of” just as it did in the first part of this verse.
  - This is also causal – Jesus was raised by the Father because our justification was a reality already in existence at the resurrection.
  - This is true because Jesus had paid for our trespasses – past, present and future – through His spiritual death on the cross which satisfied the Father’s righteous demand and made our justification possible.
- Principles of Romans 4:23-25
  - Righteousness being imputed to Abraham on the basis of faith is recorded in Genesis so that we can know that the same will be true for us today.
  - All Scripture is spiritually profitable for Christians today [2 Tim 3:16; 1 Cor 10:1-6].
  - Our faith in Jesus Christ is essentially faith in God the Father who raised Jesus [1 Pet 1:20-21].
  - Because our sins were counted against us, Jesus was delivered over by God the Father so that, through His death on the cross, our sins would no longer be counted against us [2 Cor 5:18-21].
  - Jesus Christ’s spiritual death on the cross accomplished everything necessary for our justification [John 19:30].
  - However, as Paul makes very clear in this chapter of Romans, we become beneficiaries of His work on the cross by grace through faith [Rom 4:16].
  - Given that the work on the cross was complete and God the Father was pleased with what His Son had accomplished, there was no reason to hold Jesus under the bonds of physical death.
  - Jesus was resurrected as proof that He was who He said He was [Luke 9:22; Rom 1:4] and conclusive evidence of the Father’s satisfaction with His work on the cross.
  - Given that God the Father resurrected Jesus, we can know that He will certainly resurrect us as well [John 6:39-40; 1 Cor 6:14; 15:20-23].