

Romans 4 – The Salvation of Abraham



Opening Questions

- How are Jews saved?
- How is the salvation of Abraham an example?
- Was Abraham father of the Jews or all nations?

1 What then shall we say that Abraham our father has found according to the flesh? 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 accounted to him for righteousness." 4 Now to him who works, the wages are not counted as grace but as debt.

5 But to him who does not work but believes on Him who justifies the ungodly, his faith is accounted for righteousness, 6 just as David also describes the blessedness of the man to whom God imputes righteousness apart from works:

7 "Blessed are those whose lawless deeds are forgiven,
And whose sins are covered;

8 Blessed is the man to whom the LORD shall not impute sin."

Q: (v1) Why does Paul go into the salvation of Abraham?

- It's a pre-emptive strike. Paul knows the Jews would point to Abraham as an example for their salvation as Jews.

Q: (v3) What scripture does Paul point to in the Old Testament?

- Genesis 15:6

Q: (v3) Why is the word "accounted" important?

- It is used in financial and judicial circumstances.
- It literally means crediting to another account
- Abraham was credited from another account, the future Messiah, for his righteousness

Q: (v4-6) Does God owe anyone anything?

- This verse declares that God would owe us salvation if it were attainable through our works.
- He states again in verse 5, faith is accounted righteousness, not works

Q: (v7-8) What is Paul's point in quoting King David?

- This Psalm (32) occurs after David's Bathsheba and murder incident
- The Lord covers sin by another payer, not through their works

9 Does this blessedness then come upon the circumcised only, or upon the uncircumcised also? For we say that faith was accounted to Abraham for righteousness. 10 How then was it accounted? While he was circumcised, or uncircumcised? Not while circumcised, but while uncircumcised. 11 And he received the sign of circumcision, a seal of the righteousness of the faith which he had while still uncircumcised, that he might be the father of all those who believe, though they are uncircumcised, that righteousness might be imputed to them also, 12 and the father of circumcision to those who not only are of the circumcision, but who also walk in the steps of the faith which our father Abraham had while still uncircumcised.

Q: (v9) When was Abraham circumcised?

- 99 years old!

Q: (v10) When was Abraham saved?

- Well before then.
- Paul is making the statement that Abraham was saved at least 14 years earlier (~2079 BC), when Ishmael was born (Gen 16:16).
- God accounted Abraham righteous before his circumcision (Gen 15:6).

Q: (v11-12) What is the Holy Spirit, via Paul, stating the circumcision was?

- This circumcision was a response, in obedience.
- Abraham was faithful, demonstrating his salvation well before any physical action

Q: (v12) Who was Abraham the "father" of?

- All those who believe, walking in faith

13 For the promise that he would be the heir of the world was not to Abraham or to his seed 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 made of no effect, 15 because the law brings about wrath; for where there is no law there is no transgression.

16 Therefore it is of faith that it might be according to grace, so that the promise might be sure to all the seed, 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, "I have made you a father of many nations") in the presence of Him whom he believed—God, who gives life to the dead and calls those things which do not exist as though they did; 18 who, contrary to hope, in hope believed, so that he became the father of many nations, according to what was spoken, "So shall your descendants be." 19 And not being weak in faith, he did not consider his own body, already dead (since he was about a hundred years old), and the deadness of Sarah's womb. 20 He did not waver at the promise of God through unbelief, but was strengthened in faith, giving glory to God, 21 and being fully convinced that what He had promised He was also able to perform. 22 And therefore "it was accounted to him for righteousness."

23 Now it was not written for his sake alone that it was imputed to him, 24 but also for us. It shall be imputed to us who believe in Him who raised up Jesus our Lord from the dead, 25 who was delivered up because of our offenses, and was raised because of our justification.

Q: (v13) What was the promise?

- Not to be a seed of Abraham, but to anyone through the righteousness of faith

Q: (15) What was the purpose of the law then?

- To illustrate, illuminate the truth

Q: (v20) Why did Abraham believe God would give him a son, even though it was physically impossible?

- Faith, trust that God would do what He claimed He would

Q: (v23-25) If Abraham was justified by faith, is it limited only to Him, or the Jews?

- No. The righteousness of Jesus is imputed to all who believe God raised His Son from the dead

Q: (v25) Why was Jesus raised?

- For our justification, His perfect payment was imputed to all who place their trust and faith in Him

Q: (v25) Can you have faith in Jesus without a relationship with Him?

- No. In response we pray to Him, worship Him, learn about Him through His word, etc.



Theme

For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ, for it is the power of God to salvation for everyone who believes, for the Jew first and also for the Greek. For in it the righteousness of God is revealed from faith to faith; as it is written, "The just shall live by faith." – Rom 1:16-17

Next Up

Romans





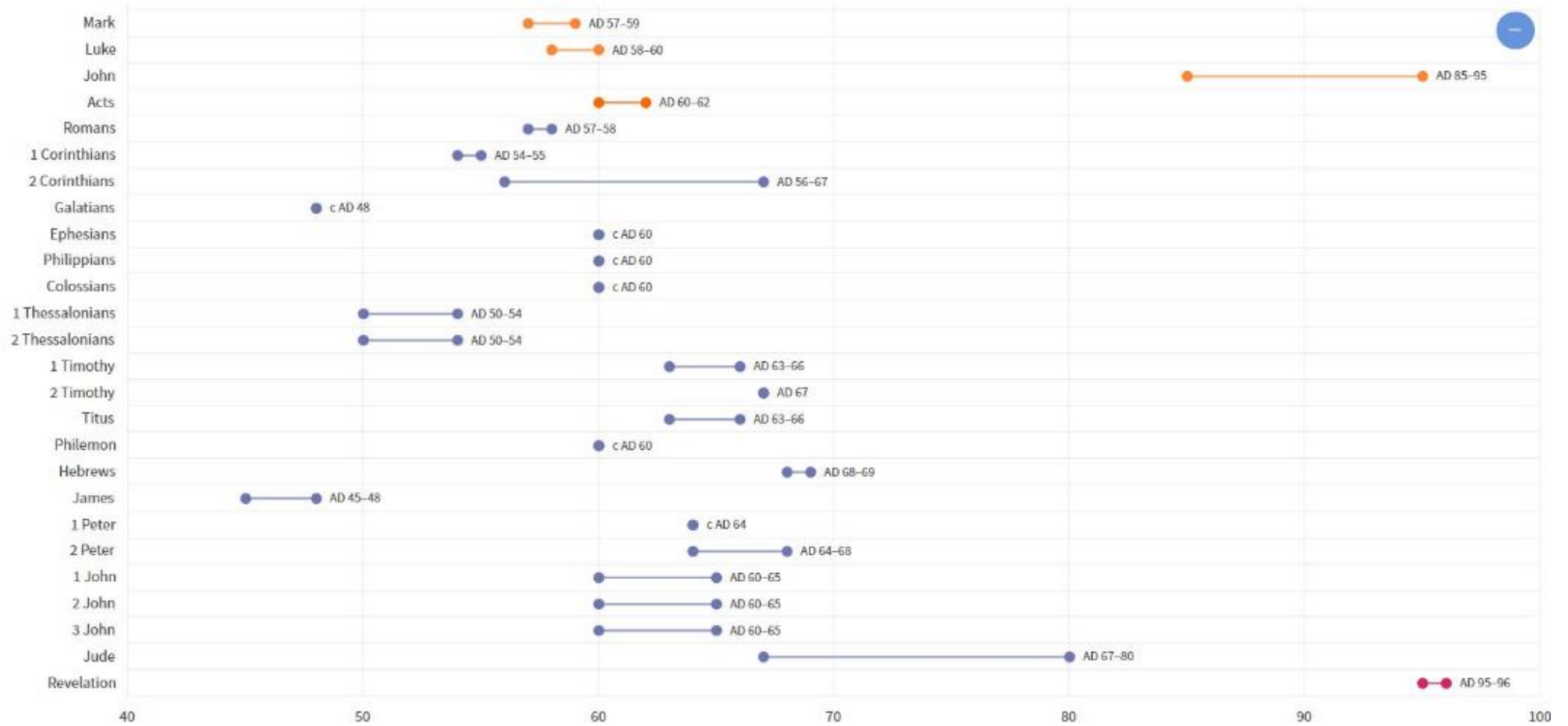
Co-writer – Apostle Paul

- Born as Saul in Tarsus (on the southern coast of modern-day Turkey). Likely borne about the same time as Jesus.
- Schooled as a Pharisee under the Jerusalem religious famous Gamaliel.
- Became a traveling missionary and preacher for the early church; renamed Paul.
- Worked as an artisan who made tents – maybe subcomponents
- Was imprisoned multiple times by the Roman authorities for his religious agitation.
- Believed to have co-written 6 letters to the churches.
- Died sometime between AD 62–64; Paul, believed to be in Rome.



- **AD 33 Damascus – Direct conversion**
- **AD 33-36 Arabia – Receiving direct revelation from the Lord (Gal 1)**
- **3 missionary journeys to Asia minor**
- **AD 56 Wrote Romans on 3rd journey in Corinth**





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- Romans ties to other books of the bible



Paul's Testimony to Agrippa – Acts 26



1. Then Agrippa said to Paul, "You are permitted to speak for yourself."

So Paul stretched out his hand and answered for himself: 2 "I think myself happy, King Agrippa, because today I shall answer for myself before you concerning all the things of which I am accused by the Jews, 3 especially because you are expert in all customs and questions which have to do with the Jews. Therefore I beg you to hear me patiently.

4 "My manner of life from my youth, which was spent from the beginning among my own nation at Jerusalem, all the Jews know. 5 They knew me from the first, if they were willing to testify, that according to the strictest sect of our religion I lived a Pharisee. 6 And now I stand and am judged for the hope of the promise made by God to our fathers. 7 To this promise our twelve tribes, earnestly serving God night and day, hope to attain. For this hope's sake, King Agrippa, I am accused by the Jews. 8 Why should it be thought incredible by you that God raises the dead?

9 "Indeed, I myself thought I must do many things contrary to the name of Jesus of Nazareth. 10 This I also did in Jerusalem, and many of the saints I shut up in prison, having received authority from the chief priests; and when they were put to death, I cast my vote against them. 11 And I punished them often in every synagogue and compelled them to blaspheme; and being exceedingly enraged against them, I persecuted them even to foreign cities.

Paul's Testimony to Agrippa – Acts 26



12 “While thus occupied, as I journeyed to Damascus with authority and commission from the chief priests, 13 at midday, O king, along the road I saw a light from heaven, brighter than the sun, shining around me and those who journeyed with me. 14 And when we all had fallen to the ground, I heard a voice speaking to me and saying in the Hebrew language, ‘Saul, Saul, why are you persecuting Me? It is hard for you to kick against the goads.’ 15 So I said, ‘Who are You, Lord?’ And He said, ‘I am Jesus, whom you are persecuting. 16 But rise and stand on your feet; for I have appeared to you for this purpose, to make you a minister and a witness both of the things which you have seen and of the things which I will yet reveal to you. 17 I will deliver you from the Jewish people, as well as from the Gentiles, to whom I now send you, 18 to open their eyes, in order to turn them from darkness to light, and from the power of Satan to God, that they may receive forgiveness of sins and an inheritance among those who are sanctified by faith in Me.’

19 “Therefore, King Agrippa, I was not disobedient to the heavenly vision, 20 but declared first to those in Damascus and in Jerusalem, and throughout all the region of Judea, and then to the Gentiles, that they should repent, turn to God, and do works befitting repentance. 21 For these reasons the Jews seized me in the temple and tried to kill me. 22 Therefore, having obtained help from God, to this day I stand, witnessing both to small and great, saying no other things than those which the prophets and Moses said would come— 23 that the Christ would suffer, that He would be the first to rise from the dead, and would proclaim light to the Jewish people and to the Gentiles.”

Paul's Testimony to Agrippa – Acts 26



24 Now as he thus made his defense, Festus said with a loud voice, "Paul, you are beside yourself! Much learning is driving you mad!"

25 But he said, "I am not mad, most noble Festus, but speak the words of truth and reason. 26 For the king, before whom I also speak freely, knows these things; for I am convinced that none of these things escapes his attention, since this thing was not done in a corner. 27 King Agrippa, do you believe the prophets? I know that you do believe."

28 Then Agrippa said to Paul, "You almost persuade me to become a Christian."

29 And Paul said, "I would to God that not only you, but also all who hear me today, might become both almost and altogether such as I am, except for these chains."

30 When he had said these things, the king stood up, as well as the governor and Bernice and those who sat with them; 31 and when they had gone aside, they talked among themselves, saying, "This man is doing nothing deserving of death or chains."

32 Then Agrippa said to Festus, "This man might have been set free if he had not appealed to Caesar."

The Depravity of Man – The Bad News

Self-will and self satisfaction reign in mans heart



This produces guilt, masked with even more self-seeking



This produces meaninglessness, as nothing truly satisfies



This produces hopelessness, we sense the supernatural promise of life after death and the consequences of it