

# FAITH AND JUSTIFICATION: THE WAY FOR THE WORLD TO BE RIGHT WITH GOD

(104)

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[Romans 3:21-5:21](#)

(Continuation from 12/16/18)

## C. Logic: The Evidence that Faith Alone Justifies a Man,

### [Romans 4:1-8](#)

[Romans 4:1-8 \(NASB\)](#)

<sup>1</sup> “What then shall we say that Abraham, our forefather according to the flesh, has found?

<sup>2</sup> For if Abraham was justified by works, he has something to boast about, but not before God.

<sup>3</sup> For what does the Scripture say? “ABRAHAM BELIEVED GOD, AND IT WAS CREDITED TO HIM AS RIGHTEOUSNESS.”

<sup>4</sup> Now to the one who works, his wage is not credited as a favor, but as what is due.

<sup>5</sup> But to the one who does not work, but believes in Him who justifies the ungodly, his faith is credited as righteousness,

<sup>6</sup> just as David also speaks of the blessing on the man to whom God credits righteousness apart from works:

<sup>7</sup> “BLESSED ARE THOSE WHOSE LAWLESS DEEDS HAVE BEEN FORGIVEN, AND WHOSE SINS HAVE BEEN COVERED.

<sup>8</sup> BLESSED IS THE MAN WHOSE SIN THE LORD WILL NOT TAKE INTO ACCOUNT.”

**Introduction:** most people think they become acceptable to God by doing the best they can. Most actually believe they secure God’s approval by being reasonably good: by being a respectable and upright citizen and by occasionally helping others who are less fortunate. But note a startling fact: a man is not justified by works, but by faith. Logic proves the fact.

1. [The logic of Abraham’s justification \(v.1-3\).](#)
2. [The logic of the worker or laborer \(v.4-5\).](#)
3. [The logic of David’s “blessed man” \(v.6-8\).](#)

## DEEPER STUDY # 1

[\(Romans 4:1-25\) Abraham— Jews, the Seed— Justification— Righteousness— New](#)

**Creation:** Abraham held a unique position in the Jewish nation, for he was the founder of the nation. He was the man whom God had challenged to be a witness to the other nations of the world—a witness to the only living and true God. God had appeared to Abraham and challenged him to leave his home, his friends, his employment, and his country.

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God made two great promises if Abraham would follow God unquestionably: Abraham would become the father of a new nation, and all nations of the earth would be blessed by his seed ([Genesis 12:1-5](#); [Genesis 13:14-17](#); [Genesis 15:1-7](#); [Genesis 17:1-8, 15-19](#); [Genesis 22:15-18](#); [Genesis 26:2-5, 24](#); [Genesis 28:13-15](#); [Genesis 35:9-12](#)).

[Genesis 26:1-5 \(NASB\)](#)

<sup>1</sup> “Now there was a famine in the land, besides the previous famine that had occurred in the days of Abraham. So, Isaac went to Gerar, to Abimelech king of the Philistines.

<sup>2</sup> The LORD appeared to him and said, “Do not go down to Egypt; stay in the land of which I shall tell you.

<sup>3</sup> Sojourn in this land and I will be with you and bless you, for to you and to your descendants I will give all these lands, and I will establish the oath which I swore to your father Abraham.

<sup>4</sup> I will multiply your descendants as the stars of heaven and will give your descendants all these lands; and by your descendants all the nations of the earth shall be blessed;

<sup>5</sup> because Abraham obeyed Me and kept My charge, My commandments, My statutes and My laws.”

## Isaac’s Journey Through Life: Facing and Overcoming Trials, [Genesis 26:1-35](#)

[\(Genesis 26:1-35\) Introduction](#): trial after trial confronts us as we journey through life. In fact, a person’s life could easily be written by headlining the major trials of his life and describing how he dealt with those trials. This is how Isaac’s life is recorded in Scripture, and this is the only chapter in which Isaac is the main character. His life is covered by highlighting the trials he had to face. The believer can learn much by applying the lessons of Isaac’s trials to his own journey upon earth: *Isaac’s Journey Through Life: Facing and Overcoming Trials*, [Genesis 26:1-35](#).

**Trial 1: facing terrible loss and the temptation to forsake the promised land (v.1-6).**

**Trial 2: facing danger and fear by lying and acting selfishly (v.7-11).**

**Trial 3: facing envy and rejection because of prosperity (v.12-17).**

**Trial 4: facing strife and hostility (v.18-22).**

**Trial 5: facing fear and the failure of God’s promises (v.23-25).**

**Trial 6: facing the need to build good relationships (v.26-33).**

**Trial 7: facing disappointment in a wayward child (v.34-35).**

### 1. [\(Genesis 26:1-6\) Trials— Temptation— Famine— Covenant, Abrahamic](#):

trial one is facing terrible loss and the temptation to forsake the promised land. A famine arose in the land, and note, it was a different famine than the one Abraham had faced (see—[Genesis 12:10-13:4](#)).

Isaac faced the loss of his ranch and farming business, of his herds, flocks, and crops. He stood on the brink of losing his wealth, and remember, he was very wealthy. He had inherited

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most of the wealth of his father, Abraham, who was probably the strongest and wealthiest sheik in Canaan ([Genesis 26:12-14, 16](#)).

[Genesis 26:12-14 \(NASB\)](#)

<sup>12</sup> “Now Isaac sowed in that land and reaped in the same year a hundredfold. And the LORD blessed him,

<sup>13</sup> and the man became rich, and continued to grow richer until he became very wealthy;

<sup>14</sup> for he had possessions of flocks and herds and a great household, so that the Philistines envied him.”

[Genesis 26:16 \(NASB\)](#)

<sup>16</sup> “Then Abimelech said to Isaac, “Go away from us, for you are too powerful for us.”

Obviously, the famine was severe, so severe that Isaac feared bankruptcy. What was he to do? Stay in the promised land or forsake it and go south, down toward Egypt where there was rich fertile land and plenty of markets for his herds and crops?

Isaac was facing a terrible trial and temptation, the trial of losing all he had and the temptation to distrust God, to stop believing God and forsake the promised land. How would he stand up under this trial and temptation? The Scripture and outline tell us.

**1. Isaac weakened under the pressure.** He turned from the promised land, moving his herds and flocks southward toward Egypt. On the way to Egypt he stopped in Gerar, the capital of the Philistines, to ask help from Abimelech, the ruler of the Philistines. Apparently, the prospect of Isaac setting up his ranch and trading in Gerar appealed to Abimelech, so he gave Isaac permission to stay in Philistine territory.

**2. But note God’s intervention.** God appeared to Isaac and instructed him not to go down into Egypt, but to live in the land where God would tell him to live, that is, Canaan, the land of promise. Remember: in Scripture, the Egypt of that day was a symbol and type of the world, and Canaan was the promised land, a symbol and type of heaven.

**Thought 1.** A believer should never forsake the promised land of heaven, never turn to what may appear to be the better markets offered by the world. A believer must never compromise his hope for heaven to gain the possessions and riches of the world.

[Deuteronomy 8:13-14 \(NASB\)](#)

<sup>13</sup> “And when your herds and your flocks multiply, and your silver and gold multiply, and all that you have multiplies,

<sup>14</sup> then your heart **will** become proud and you **will** forget the LORD your God who brought you out from the land of Egypt, out of the house of slavery.”

[Jeremiah 17:5-8 \(NASB\)](#)

<sup>5</sup> “Thus says the LORD, “Cursed is the man who trusts in mankind and makes flesh his strength, and whose heart turns away from the LORD.

<sup>6</sup> For he will be like a bush in the desert and will not see when prosperity comes, but will live in stony wastes in the wilderness, A land of salt without inhabitant.

<sup>7</sup> Blessed is the man who trusts in the LORD And whose trust is the LORD.

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<sup>8</sup> For he will be like a tree planted by the water, that extends its roots by a stream and will not fear when the heat comes; But its leaves will be green, And it will not be anxious in a year of drought Nor cease to yield fruit.”

[Matthew 6:19-21 \(NASB\)](#)

<sup>19</sup> “Do not store up for yourselves treasures on earth, where moth and rust destroy, and where thieves break in and steal.

<sup>20</sup> But store up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust destroys, and where thieves do not break in or steal;

<sup>21</sup> for where your treasure is, there your heart will be also.”

[Mark 4:19 \(NASB\)](#)

<sup>19</sup> “But the worries of the world, and the deceitfulness of riches, and the desires for other things enter in and choke the word [of God], and it becomes unfruitful.”

[1 Timothy 6:9 \(NASB\)](#)

<sup>9</sup> “But those who want to get rich fall into temptation and a snare and many foolish and harmful desires which plunge men into ruin and destruction.”

3. **God made a great promise to Isaac:** if he would live in the hope of the promised land, then God would be with him and bless him ([Genesis 26:3](#)).

[Genesis 26:3 \(NASB\)](#)

<sup>3</sup> “Sojourn in this land and I will be with you and bless you, for to you and to your descendants I will give all these lands, and I will establish the oath which I swore to your father Abraham.”

Isaac then would receive the promises made to Abraham, the promises of the Abrahamic covenant. God had given the promises to Abraham eight different times ([Genesis 12:1-3, 7](#); [Genesis 13:14-16](#); [Genesis 15:1](#); [Genesis 17:2](#); [Genesis 18:10](#); [Genesis 21:22](#); [Genesis 22:9-14](#)).

[Genesis 12:1-3 \(NASB\)](#)

<sup>1</sup> “Now the LORD said to Abram, “Go forth from your country, And from your relatives And from your father's house, To the land which I will show you;

<sup>2</sup> And I will make you a great nation, And I will bless you, And make your name great; And so you shall be a blessing;

<sup>3</sup> And I will bless those who bless you, And the one who curses you I will curse. And in you all the families of the earth will be blessed.”

[Genesis 12:7 \(NASB\)](#)

<sup>7</sup> “The LORD appeared to Abram and said, “To your descendants I will give this land.” So, he built an altar there to the LORD who had appeared to him.”

[Genesis 13:14-16 \(NASB\)](#)

<sup>14</sup> “The LORD said to Abram, after Lot had separated from him, “Now lift up your eyes and look from the place where you are, northward and southward and eastward and westward;

<sup>15</sup> for all the land which you see, I will give it to you and to your descendants forever.

<sup>16</sup> “I will make your descendants as the dust of the earth, so that if anyone can number the dust of the earth, then your descendants can also be numbered.”

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**Genesis 15:1 (NASB)**

<sup>1</sup> “After these things the word of the LORD came to Abram in a vision, saying, “Do not fear, Abram, I am a shield to you; Your reward shall be very great.”

**Genesis 17:2 (NASB)**

<sup>2</sup> “I will establish My covenant between Me and you, And I will multiply you exceedingly.”

**Genesis 18:10 (NASB)**

<sup>10</sup> “He said, “I will surely return to you at this time next year; and behold, Sarah your wife will have a son.” And Sarah was listening at the tent door, which was behind him.”

**Genesis 21:22 (NASB)**

<sup>22</sup> “Now it came about at that time that Abimelech and Phicol, the commander of his army, spoke to Abraham, saying, “God is with you in all that you do.”

**Genesis 22:9-14 (NASB)**

<sup>9</sup> “Then they came to the place of which God had told him; and Abraham built the altar there and arranged the wood and bound his son Isaac and laid him on the altar, on top of the wood.

<sup>10</sup> Abraham stretched out his hand and took the knife to slay his son.

<sup>11</sup> But the angel of the LORD called to him from heaven and said, “Abraham, Abraham!” And he said, “Here I am.”

<sup>12</sup> He said, “Do not stretch out your hand against the lad, and do nothing to him; for now I know that you fear God, since you have not withheld your son, your only son, from Me.”

<sup>13</sup> Then Abraham raised his eyes and looked, and behold, behind *him* a ram caught in the thicket by his horns; and Abraham went and took the ram and offered him up for a burnt offering in the place of his son.

<sup>14</sup> Abraham called the name of that place The LORD Will Provide, as it is said to this day, “In the mount of the LORD it will be provided.”

He gave the promises to Isaac on two different occasions ([Genesis 25:2](#), [24](#)).

**Genesis 25:2 (NASB)**

<sup>2</sup> “She bore to him Zimran and Jokshan and Medan and Midian and Ishbak and Shuah.”

**Genesis 25:24 (NASB)**

<sup>24</sup> “When her days to be delivered were fulfilled, behold, there were twins in her womb.”

What were the promises?

a. He would receive *all these lands* ([Genesis 26:3](#)). Note the plural. This probably refers to inheriting all the land of the earth as well as Canaan.

**Genesis 26:3 (NASB)**

<sup>3</sup> “Sojourn in this land and I will be with you and bless you, for to you and to your descendants I will give all these lands, and I will establish the oath which I swore to your father Abraham.”

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**Romans 4:13 (NASB)**

<sup>13</sup> “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.”

b. He would receive *the promised seed, bear nations of people* through his offspring, so many that they would number as the stars of the sky ([Genesis 26:4](#)).

**Genesis 26:4 (NASB)**

<sup>4</sup> “I will multiply your descendants as the stars of heaven and will give your descendants all these lands; and by your descendants all the nations of the earth shall be blessed.”

c. He would receive *the promised seed of the Messiah, the Savior of the world*. Isaac’s seed, his offspring, would bless all the nations of the earth through the Savior.

4. Note God’s reason for giving these great promises to Abraham, the father of Isaac: because Abraham was faithful to God; he obeyed God ([Genesis 26:5](#)).

**Genesis 26:5 (NASB)**

<sup>5</sup> “Because Abraham obeyed Me and kept My charge, My commandments, My statutes and My laws.”

Abraham did not have the written law of God to follow, but he did have the inner witness of God: an instinctive knowledge of God, his conscience, and his thoughts. And most of all, Abraham had both the privilege of prayer and God’s presence to teach and guide him day by day and step by step.

Note how completely and responsibly Abraham obeyed God:

- ⇒ **Abraham kept the *charge of God***. A charge has to do with God’s official call or appointment to service. Abraham kept the charge to be the head of God’s people, the father of faith.
- ⇒ **Abraham kept the *commandments of God***. The word *commandment* stresses the fact that the command is from God Himself; it is divinely given. Abraham kept the commandment of God to believe God, to separate from Ur (a symbol of the world) and to follow after the promises of God.
- ⇒ **Abraham kept the *statutes of God***. The word *statute* refers to the permanence, the unending force of what God says. An example of this would be Abraham’s keeping the statute of circumcision.
- ⇒ **Abraham kept the *laws of God***. Laws would involve rules of instruction that need to be taught and passed on. They would be rules of righteousness that govern behavior. Abraham followed the rules of God from the depths of his heart and conscience.

5. Now note Isaac’s half-hearted obedience. He obeyed God, but only partially. He did not go down into Egypt, but neither did he return to the heart of Canaan. He stayed in Gerar which was on the border of Canaan, right at the entrance to Egypt.

This was a wrong decision. This is clearly seen in the events that followed:

- ⇒ the sin of lying by claiming that Rebekah was his sister ([Genesis 26:7](#)).

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**Genesis 26:7 (NASB)**

<sup>7</sup> “When the men of the place asked about his wife, he said, “She is my sister,” for he was afraid to say, “my wife,” *thinking*, “the men of the place might kill me on account of Rebekah, for she is beautiful.”

⇒ the trouble that arose between him and the Philistines ([Genesis 26:16-21](#)).

**Genesis 26:16-21 (NASB)**

<sup>16</sup> “Then Abimelech said to Isaac, “Go away from us, for you are too powerful for us.”

<sup>17</sup> And Isaac departed from there and camped in the valley of Gerar and settled there.

<sup>18</sup> Then Isaac dug again the wells of water which had been dug in the days of his father Abraham, for the Philistines had stopped them up after the death of Abraham; and he gave them the same names which his father had given them.

<sup>19</sup> But when Isaac’s servants dug in the valley and found there a well of flowing water,

<sup>20</sup> the herdsmen of Gerar quarreled with the herdsmen of Isaac, saying, “The water is ours!” So, he named the well Esek, because they contended with him.

<sup>21</sup> Then they dug another well, and they quarreled over it too, so he named it Sitnah.”

⇒ the fact that the Lord appeared to Isaac and strengthened him on the very night that he finally moved back into the heartland of Canaan ([Genesis 26:23-24](#)).

**Genesis 26:23-24 (NASB)**

<sup>23</sup> “Then he went up from there to Beersheba.

<sup>24</sup> The LORD appeared to him the same night and said, “I am the God of your father Abraham; Do not fear, for I am with you. I will bless you, and multiply your descendants, For the sake of My servant Abraham.”

**The point is this:** Isaac was obeying God, but only half-heartedly and only partially. He was still afraid to trust God completely and fully, still afraid to trust God to take care of him in the face of terrible trial. He still felt that he had to hang on to the world and the help and security it seemed to offer.

**Thought 1.** How like so many of us! We only half-heartedly follow the Lord when trials confront us. We keep one foot in heaven, trying to follow God, while keeping the other foot in the world, depending upon the world to help us make it through life.

**2 Chronicles 25:2 (NASB)**

<sup>2</sup> “He did right in the sight of the LORD, yet not with a whole heart.”

**2 Corinthians 6:17-18 (NASB)**

<sup>17</sup> “Therefore, COME OUT FROM THEIR MIDST AND BE SEPARATE,” says the Lord. “AND DO NOT TOUCH WHAT IS UNCLEAN”; And I will welcome you.

<sup>18</sup> And I will be a father to you, and you shall be sons and daughters to Me,” Says the Lord Almighty.”

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**Ephesians 5:11 (NASB)**

<sup>11</sup> “Do not participate in the unfruitful deeds of darkness, but instead even expose them.”

**James 4:17 (NASB)**

<sup>17</sup> “Therefore, to one who knows *the* right thing to do and does not do it, to him it is sin.”

**1 John 2:15-16 (NASB)**

<sup>15</sup> “Do not love the world nor the things in the world. If anyone loves the world, the love of the Father is not in him.

<sup>16</sup> For all that is in the world, the lust of the flesh and the lust of the eyes and the boastful pride of life, is not from the Father, but is from the world.”

**Psalms 119:115 (NASB)**

<sup>115</sup> “Depart from me, evildoers, That I may observe the commandments of my God.”