

## Notes on the Greek New Testament Week 96 – Romans 4:1-5:5

### Day 476: Romans 4:1-8

#### Chapter 4

Cf. note on 3:27-31. Moo writes, "Throughout the chapter Paul grounds his exposition in the key verse, cited in 4:3, of Genesis 15:5: 'Abraham believed God, and it was credited to him as righteousness.' The focus is especially on the nature and meaning of Abraham's believing. Another way to look at the chapter, then, is in terms of a series of antitheses by which Paul unfolds the significance of Abraham's faith – and of ours:

1. Faith is something completely different from 'works' (vv. 3-8).
2. Faith does not depend on any religious ceremony (e.g., circumcision) (vv. 9-12).
3. Faith is not related to the law (vv. 13-17).
4. Faith often rests in a promise that flies in the face of what is natural and normal (vv. 18-22)."

Wright, however, argues that the focus is upon the covenant: "The chapter is, in fact, a full-dress exposition of the covenant God made with Abraham in Genesis 15, showing at every point that God always intended that the covenant family of Abraham would include Gentiles as well as Jews. Irrespective of what we might say about a systematic presentation of Paul's ideas, in his present argument this is the main topic, to which 'justification by faith' makes a vital contribution, rather than the other way round... Paul is arguing ... that Abraham's faith is the sole badge of membership in God's people, and that therefore those who share it are 'justified.'"

#### Verse 1

τί οὖν ἐροῦμεν εὐρηκεῖν Ἀβραάμ τὸν προπάτορα ἡμῶν κατὰ σάρκα;

ἐροῦμεν Verb, fut act indic, 1 pl λεγω  
εὐρηκεῖν Verb, perf act infin εὐρισκω

"Abraham is a key figure in God's plan of salvation as revealed in the Old Testament. One of Paul's purposes in Romans is to demonstrate that the gospel is in continuity with the Old Testament (see, e.g., 1:2; 3:21)." Moo.

προπατωρ, ορος m forefather

προπατορα is ἀπαξ λεγομενον in the New Testament and is replaced in some MSS by the common πατερα.

σαρξ, σαρκος f flesh, human nature

There are textual variations in this verse which affect its sense. Some mss have εὐρηκεῖν after ἡμῶν and before κατὰ σάρκα (including the Byzantine texts and therefore the 'Received' Text and AV). With the infinitive in this position it is difficult to separate it logically from κατὰ σάρκα, which would require a translation such as 'what was it that Abraham ... found according to the flesh?' What this might mean is not entirely clear. However, this reading is not so well attested as that with εὐρηκεῖν before Ἀβραάμ. It is therefore best to understand κατὰ σάρκα to belong with τὸν προπατορα ἡμῶν. The implication (to be made explicit later, cf. vv.11, 16-17), is that, in a spiritual sense, Abraham is also the father of Gentile believers.

Wright, following Richard Hays, translates this verse "What then shall we say? Have we found Abraham to be our forefather according to the flesh?" – a question which then receives its answer in vv. 16-17 where Abraham is shown to be the father of many nations. Paul is writing about the scope of Abraham's family. τί οὖν ἐροῦμεν is then read as a phrase complete in itself, as in 6:1; 7:7 (cf. τί οὖν in 3:9). Wright continues, "At this point, however, I diverge from the meaning Hays gives to his own proposed reading. He suggests that Paul wants to say 'Have we *Jews* normally considered Abraham to be our forefather only according to the flesh?' I suggest, rather, that the whole of Romans 4 hinges on the question, whether 3:21-31 means that we *Christians*, Jews and Gentiles alike, now find that we are to be members of the fleshly family of Abraham."

#### Verse 2

εἰ γὰρ Ἀβραάμ ἐξ ἔργων ἐδικαιωθη, ἔχει καύχημα· ἀλλ' οὐ πρὸς θεόν.

ἐδικαιωθη Verb, aor pass indic, 3 s  
δικαιωω justify, declare & treat as righteous

καυχημα, τος n ground for boasting

On 'boasting' cf. 2:17-20.

ἀλλ• οὐ πρὸς θεὸν The opening γὰρ of the following verse might suggest that these words belong with what follows: "But in fact before God there is none for ..." Moo prefers to take the phrase with what precedes, understanding the sense to be something like, 'From God's perspective, Abraham has no right at all to boast because he was not, and could not be, justified by works.'

### Verse 3

τί γὰρ ἢ γραφὴ λέγει; Ἐπίστευσεν δὲ Ἀβραάμ τῷ θεῷ, καὶ ἐλογίσθη αὐτῷ εἰς δικαιοσύνην.

Paul now says what *is* true before God.

γραφη, ης f writing, Scripture

"Genesis 15:6 is a foundational Old Testament verse for Paul's characteristic emphasis on justification by faith (see also Gal 3:6). This verse describes Abraham's response to God's promise that he would have descendants as innumerable as the stars in the sky. But this promise, in turn, stands in a sequence of similar divine promises to Abraham about his role as the founder of a nation and mediator of world-wide blessing (see esp. Gen 12:1-3). So Paul probably reads Genesis 15:6 as a summary of Abraham's response to God's promise to him generally." Moo.

ἐλογίσθη Verb, aor pass indic, 3s

λογίζομαι reckon, count, credit

The Jews interpreted this as meaning that Abraham's faith was a righteous act, a work which merited God's favour. Paul contrasts grace and works rather than faith and works. It is the nature of grace (salvation by God's free and unmerited gift) that defines the nature of faith. Faith is not a human work but the abandonment of all human effort to trust and rest simply in the promise of God and the work of Christ. Hence the argument presented by Paul in the following verses.

Paul therefore lays great emphasis on the fact that Abraham was '*reckoned*' righteous (see the use of λογίζομαι here and through to verse 8). The implication is that God accounted or reckoned to him "a righteousness that does not inherently belong to him." O Palmer Robertson.

Wright, however, comments, "We should be careful not to assume, as normal English usage of 'righteousness' might lead us to do, that (a) 'righteousness' means 'moral goodness,' and that (b) 'faith' is then either a form of, or a substitute for, such moral goodness. When Abraham's faith is 'counted for righteousness,' it means that this faith is the sure sign that his acquittal or vindication has already taken place... Abraham's faith was the sure sign that he was in partnership with God; and God sealed this with the covenant ceremony and detailed promises about Abraham's seed and their inheritance."

### Verse 4

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

ἐργαζομαι work, do, perform

μισθος, ου m pay, wages, reward

χαρις, ιτος f grace, unmerited favour

ὀφείλημα, τος n debt

### Verse 5

τῷ δὲ μὴ ἐργαζομένῳ, πιστεύοντι δὲ ἐπὶ τὸν δικαιοῦντα τὸν ἀσεβῆ, λογίζεται ἡ πίστις αὐτοῦ εἰς δικαιοσύνην,

I.e., by contrast, "God's declaration of justification is a matter of grace (v.4), and it has to do with justifying the *ungodly* (v. 5)." Wright.

ἀσεβης, ες godless, impious

Wright comments, "Paul is presumably thinking of Abraham's whole history, from his background in pagan Ur through to YHWH's call and the establishing of the covenant.

Jewish tradition knew of Abraham's background in idolatry and tended to regard him as the first one to protest against this and to worship the one true God instead. Paul does not entirely dissent from this tradition. As he will show in the rest of the chapter, Abraham is thus the forefather quite specifically of Gentiles who come to faith, not merely of Jews. This is, in fact, the beginning of a daring theme: that Abraham is actually *more like* believing Gentiles than he is like believing Jews."

This can only be on the basis of Jesus death; cf. Ex 23:7; Prov 17:15 and above on Rom 3:21-26. Cf. also Rom 1:18.

πιστις, εως f faith, trust, belief

The contrast is not to be taken to mean that faith is a substitute work for which one gets paid – otherwise grace would not be grace. The contrast is between working and not working.

**Verse 6**

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

καθαπερ as, just as

μακαρισμος, ου m happiness, blessing  
χωρὶς prep with gen without, apart from

**Verse 7**

Μακάριοι ὧν ἀφέθησαν αἱ ἀνομίαι καὶ ὧν ἐπεκαλύφθησαν αἱ ἁμαρτίαι·

The quotation is from Psalm 32:1,2. "The key point in what David says in Psalm 32 for Paul is that the people who are blessed are not those who have earned something from God; they are the ones who have received something from him." Moo.

μακαριος, α, ου blessed, fortunate,  
happy

ἀφέθησαν Verb, aor pass indic, 3 pl ἀφιημι  
cancel, forgive

ἀνομια, ας f lawlessness, sin

ἐπεκαλύφθησαν Verb, aor pass indic, 3 pl

ἐπικαλυπτω cover

ἁμαρτια, ας f sin

**Verse 8**

μακάριος ἀνὴρ οὗ οὐ μὴ λογίσηται κύριος ἁμαρτίαν.

ἀνηρ, ἀνδρος m man

λογίσηται Verb, aor midd dep subj, 3 s

"These verses therefore confirm what Paul has argued in Romans 4:4-5: God 'justifies the wicked.' That is, he 'declares innocent' people who are really not, in themselves, innocent. He grants them a status they have not earned and do not deserve." Moo.

**Day 477: Romans 4:9-12****Verses 9-12**

Abraham was justified before he was circumcised. Hence the blessings David spoke of (v.9) belong to the uncircumcised as well as to the circumcised. Acceptance with God is dependent on faith, not on circumcision.

**Verse 9**

ὁ μακαρισμὸς οὗν οὗτος ἐπὶ τὴν περιτομὴν ἢ καὶ ἐπὶ τὴν ἀκροβυστίαν; λέγομεν γάρ, Ἐλογίσθη τῷ Ἀβραάμ ἡ πίστις εἰς δικαιοσύνην.

μακαρισμος see v.6

περιτομη see 3:30

ἀκροβυστια see 3:30

ἐλογίσθη see v.3

**Verse 10**

πὼς οὖν ἐλογίσθη; ἐν περιτομῇ ὄντι ἢ ἐν ἀκροβυστίᾳ; οὐκ ἐν περιτομῇ ἀλλ' ἐν ἀκροβυστίᾳ·

πὼς how? i.e. in what circumstances

"So far from it being necessary, in other words (still answering v. 1), for Gentile believers to 'discover' Abraham as their physical father – that is, for them to get circumcised – it is necessary for Jewish people to 'discover' Abraham to be their uncircumcised father – that is, to share his faith." Wright.

**Verse 11**

καὶ σημεῖον ἔλαβεν περιτομῆς, σφραγίδα τῆς δικαιοσύνης τῆς πίστεως τῆς ἐν τῇ ἀκροβυστίᾳ, εἰς τὸ εἶναι αὐτὸν πατέρα πάντων τῶν πιστευόντων δι' ἀκροβυστίας, εἰς τὸ λογισθῆναι [καὶ] αὐτοῖς [τὴν] δικαιοσύνην,

σημειον, ου n sign

ἔλαβεν Verb, aor act indic, 3 s λαμβανω  
σφραγις, ιδος f seal, mark, proof

Circumcision is a sign and seal of faith and its consequent righteousness. If circumcision was to act as a *sign* of faith then the faith it signified must have been present before the sign was given. The point is even stronger when circumcision is considered as a *seal*. A seal, or mark of authentication, presupposes the existence of what is sealed – otherwise it is inauthentic.

Circumcision was a sign of covenant membership which here Paul terms 'the righteousness of faith.' Righteousness and covenant membership are one and the same thing.

εἶναι Verb, pres infin εἶμι

λογισθῆναι Verb, aor pass infin λογιζομαι

The textual evidence for or against the inclusion of καὶ is finely balanced. Either its existence is due to a scribal attempt to sharpen the argument or its absence an accidental omission due to the similarity between the ending of λογισθῆναι and the following καὶ.

**Verse 12**

καὶ πατέρα περιτομῆς τοῖς οὐκ ἐκ περιτομῆς μόνον ἀλλὰ καὶ τοῖς στοιχοῦσιν τοῖς ἔχνεσιν τῆς ἐν ἀκροβυστίᾳ πίστεως τοῦ πατρὸς ἡμῶν Ἀβραάμ.

μονον adv only, alone

στοιχεω walk, conduct oneself

ἰχνος, οὐς n **footstep, step, example**

A person may not claim to have Abraham as their father simply by physical descent and circumcision (cf John 8:31ff). Those are children of Abraham, and share the promise and blessings of Abraham, who have faith like that of Abraham (cf. John 8:56; Gal 3:26-29). The sign or seal is empty without the presence of what is signified or sealed.

It is hard to underestimate the transition here in thinking between Saul the Pharisee (along with his fellow Jews) and Paul the apostle. It amounts to a new understanding of what defines the people of God. The people of God are no longer defined by descent from Abraham and by circumcision but by faith in Christ. By this, Paul not only includes Gentile believers, he also *excludes* those Jews who do not believe. All of this he asserts in the face of the pressure being placed on Gentile believers by some Jewish Christians insisting that they should be circumcised. Moo rightly warns against the attempt to apply what Paul is saying in these verses to the subject of Christian baptism. Rather, the point is that the church is to be "a genuinely 'countercultural' institution, in which the usual barriers to association – race, national background, economic status, etc. – have no relevance at all."

#### **Day 478: Romans 4:13-18**

##### **Verses 13-22**

Verses 13-22 focus on the theme of promise. Moo suggests the following breakdown:

- i) The promise is based on faith not the law (vv.13-15).
- ii) The promise, because it is based on faith, unites Jews and Gentiles together into one people of God (vv.16-17).
- iii) The faith with which Abraham responded to God's promise was firm and unwavering (vv.18-22).

##### **Verse 13**

Οὐ γὰρ διὰ νόμου ἡ ἐπαγγελία τῷ Ἀβραάμ ἢ τῷ σπέρματι αὐτοῦ, τὸ κληρονόμον αὐτὸν εἶναι κόσμου, ἀλλὰ διὰ δικαιοσύνης πίστεως·

Οὐ γὰρ διὰ νόμου cf. Gal 3:17

ἐπαγγελια, ας f **promise, what is promised**

σπερμα, τος n **seed, offspring**

vv.17,18 use this term of Christian believers.

The definite article το belongs with the infinitive εἶναι

κληρονομος, ου m **heir, one who receives what is promised (by God)**  
εἶναι Verb, pres infin εἶμι

κληρονομος κοσμου The promise to Abraham was that he, or rather his seed, would possess the *land*. Paul makes use of the ambiguity of the Hebrew term which, in itself, may mean either a specific piece of land or the earth (as in Genesis 1:1). In referencing the promise to Abraham Paul here uses the Greek term κοσμος which cannot be restricted to a piece of land.

However, Paul's argument is not mere word-play but reflects a Biblical Theology rooted in the Old Testament promise itself. Paul views the promise of the land to Abraham as typical of the promise of the earth to the people of God. This promise, which finds typical fulfilment in David's rule over the land promised to Abraham, finds ultimate fulfilment in Christ, David's greater son who is Lord of all creation. The promise of the land to Abraham's seed and promise of the κοσμος to Christ are one and the same.

δικαιοσυνη, ης f **righteousness, what is right, what God requires, justice**  
πιστις, εως f **faith, trust, belief, the Christian faith**

##### **Verse 14**

εἰ γὰρ οἱ ἐκ νόμου κληρονόμοι, κεκένωται ἡ πίστις καὶ κατήργηται ἡ ἐπαγγελία·

κεκένωται Verb, perf pass indic, 3 s **κενωω**  
**deprive of power, make of no effect**  
κατήργηται Verb, perf pass indic, 3s  
**καταργεω** **render ineffective, cancel,**  
**do away with**

"Bringing law into the matter eviscerates the very meaning of 'faith' and 'promise.'" Moo.

##### **Verse 15**

ὁ γὰρ νόμος ὀργὴν κατεργάζεται· οὐ δὲ οὐκ ἔστιν νόμος, οὐδὲ παράβασις.

ὀργη, ης f **wrath, anger**

A few interpret this of human anger, but it is the wrath of God that Paul surely has in mind, cf. 3:20; 5:20; 7:5.

κατεργαζομαι **accomplish, bring about**  
οὐ adv **where**  
παρβασις, εως f **transgression,**  
**disobedience, sin**

"Transgression ... is a sin. But not all sin is transgression. Anytime we fall short of conformity of God's image, we sin; but only when we directly violate a commandment God has given us do we commit a transgression. For this reason, then, transgression is also a more serious form of sin, meriting a greater judgment." Moo.

### Verse 16

διὰ τοῦτο ἐκ πίστεως, ἵνα κατὰ χάριν, εἰς τὸ εἶναι βεβαίαν τὴν ἐπαγγελίαν παντὶ τῷ σπέρματι, οὐ τῷ ἐκ τοῦ νόμου μόνον ἀλλὰ καὶ τῷ ἐκ πίστεως Ἀβραάμ (ὅς ἐστιν πατὴρ πάντων ἡμῶν),

δια τουτο for this reason

Looks back to v.14. For the reason given in v.14, God's plan was made to rest on faith that it might be a matter of grace. Wright argues that it points back to v. 1 – Paul now concludes the answer to the question he raised there.

χαρις, ιτος f grace  
βεβαιος, α, ον reliable, firm, well founded  
σπερμα see v.13

ἐκ του νομου here used not in the sense of means of obtaining the promise but simply as a designation for Jews.

μονον adv only, alone

ὅς ἐστιν πατὴρ πάντων ἡμῶν cf. vv.11-12.

Wright objects to the bracketing of 16b-17a. He argues, "Faith, grace and promise, then, are vital to this chapter, but they are not its main subjects. The main subjects are Abraham, his family and his God. This is what we would expect if the overall subject of the larger section is indeed the revelation of God's covenant faithfulness and the creation of a Jew-plus-Gentile family. The present verses have often been read exactly the other way round, resulting in the bracketing, by the NRSV, of the key statement in vv 16b-17a... Romans 4 is not a 'proof from Scripture' of 'justification by faith,' into which Paul has inserted some remarks about the fatherhood of Abraham and the character of God; it is an exposition of the covenant of God and the way in which the covenant promises to Abraham were fulfilled, with justification and faith playing their part within the overall argument."

### Verse 17

καθως γέγραπται ὅτι Πατέρα πολλῶν ἔθνων τέθεικά σε) κατέναντι οὐ ἐπίστευσεν θεοῦ τοῦ ζωοποιούντος τοὺς νεκροὺς καὶ καλοῦντος τὰ μὴ ὄντα ὡς ὄντα·

γέγραπται Verb, perf pass indic, 3 s γραφω  
πολυσ, πολλη, πολυ gen πολλου, ης, ου  
much, many  
ἔθνος, ους n nation, people  
τέθεικά Verb, perf act indic, 1 s τιθημι  
place, set, appoint  
σε Pronoun, acc s συ  
κατεναντι before, in the sight of

Murray understands the quotation to be parenthetical, in which case, κατεναντι οὐ refers back to πατηρ παντων ἡμων i.e. Abraham is the father of us all before God.

ζωοποιεω give life, make alive

Abraham understood this aspect of God's character (that he is the Creator God who gives life to the dead and creates something out of nothing) and it was this that enabled him to trust in the promise of descendants despite his own 'deadness' and even in the face of the later command to sacrifice his only son. This is a model of Christian faith which believes in the God who gives life to the dead in that it has its focus in Christ's death and resurrection and its confidence in the life given us in him (cf. v.24). The conversion of the Gentiles is an act of the God who calls the things that are not and brings them into being – making people of God of those who are not a people. Wright adds, "When God brings a Jew to share the faith of Abraham, this is more like a life out of death, a renewal of covenant membership after the threat of being cut off (cf. 2:25-29; 11:11-16, esp 11:15...)."

νεκρος, α, ον dead

### Verse 18

ὅς παρ• ἐλπίδα ἐπ• ἐλπίδι ἐπίστευσεν εἰς τὸ γενέσθαι αὐτὸν πατέρα πολλῶν ἔθνων κατὰ τὸ εἰρημένον, Οὕτως ἔσται τὸ σπέρμα σου·

παρα with acc contrary to  
ἐλπιδις, ιδος f hope, ground of hope, what is hoped for

It is when human hope is exhausted that God-given hope comes into effect – a hope that rests simply on the promise, power and faithfulness of God. Faith rests on what God has spoken and deems his word warrant enough.

εἰρημένον Verb, perf pass ptc, n nom/acc s  
λεγω

οὕτως adv. formed from οὗτος **thus**  
ἔσται Verb, fut indic, 2 s εἶμι

### **Day 479: Romans 4:19-25**

#### **Verse 19**

καὶ μὴ ἀσθενήσας τῇ πίστει κατενόησεν τὸ  
ἑαυτοῦ σώμα [ἤδη] νεκρωμένον,  
ἑκατονταετῆς που ὑπάρχων, καὶ τὴν  
νέκρωσιν τῆς μήτρας Σάρρας,

ἀσθενεω be ill, be weak  
κατανοεω consider, think of, notice

Textual evidence is finely divided between κατενοησεν and οὐ κατενοησεν. Either reading would make sense in context. Most versions prefer to omit οὐ.

In his *Textual Commentary on the Greek New Testament*, Metzger writes, "οὐ κατενοησεν, like many other readings of Western origin, appears at first to be preferable, after further reflection it reveals itself to be less appropriate in the context: here Paul does not wish to imply that faith means closing one's eyes to reality, but that Abraham was so strong in faith as to be undaunted by every consideration."

σώμα, τος n body  
ἤδη adv now, already

Many MSS omit ἤδη

νεκρωμένον Verb, perf pass ptc, m acc &  
n nom/acc s νεκρω put to death (pf  
pass ptc as good as dead)

ἑκατονταετῆς, ες a hundred years old  
πού enclitic adv somewhere, almost

ὑπαρχω be (equivalent to εἶμι)

νεκρωσις, εως f death

μήτρα, ας f womb

Wright comments, "Paul draws a veil over the various episodes such as Abraham's passing Sarah off as his sister and the whole matter of Hagar and Ishmael... The feature of his faith to which Paul draws attention is its persistence in hoping for new life when Abraham's and Sarah's bodies were, in terms of potential childbearing, as good as dead because of their age."

#### **Verse 20**

εἰς δὲ τὴν ἐπαγγελίαν τοῦ θεοῦ οὐ  
διεκρίθη τῇ ἀπιστίᾳ ἀλλ• ἐνεδυναμώθη τῇ  
πίστει, δοῦς δόξαν τῷ θεῷ

Wright comments that Paul "shows that Abraham was exactly unlike the human condition described in 1:18-32."

ἐπαγγελια, ας f promise  
διακρινω judge; aor pass doubt, hesitate.  
ἀπιστια, ας f unbelief

ἐνεδυναμώθη Verb, aor pass indic, 3 s  
ἐνδυναμωω strengthen; pass become  
strong

Could mean 'strengthened by faith' (dative of instrument), though most read as 'he was strengthen in faith.'

δοῦς Verb, aor act ptc, m nom s διδωμι  
δοξα, ης f glory

#### **Verse 21**

καὶ πληροφορηθεῖς ὅτι ὁ ἐπήγγελται  
δυνατός ἐστιν καὶ ποιῆσαι.

πληροφορηθεῖς Verb, aor pass ptc, m nom s  
πληροφορεω convince fully, assure  
fully

ἐπήγγελται Verb, perf pass indic, 3s

ἐπαγγελλομαι promise

δυνατος, η, ον possible, powerful, able

ποιῆσαι Verb, aor act infin ποιεω

This verse follows on from the closing words of the previous: to give glory to God is to reckon God to be what he is and to rely upon his power and faithfulness.

#### **Verse 22**

διὸ [καὶ] ἐλογίσθη αὐτῷ εἰς δικαιοσύνην.

διὸ therefore, for this reason

ἐλογίσθη Verb, aor pass indic, 3s

λογιζομαι reckon, credit

"When, therefore, Paul says that the reason Abraham's faith was 'reckoned as righteousness' was because it was this sort of faith, he does not mean that Abraham earned special favour by having a special sort of faith. He means that precisely this sort of faith, evoked by sheer grace, is evidence of a human life back on track, turned from idolatry to the worship of the true God, from disbelief to faith and from corruption to fruitfulness. Faith is the sign of life; life is the gift of God. Justification is God's declaration that where this sign of life appears, the person in whom it appears is within the covenant." Wright.

#### **Verse 23**

Οὐκ ἐγράφη δὲ δι• αὐτὸν μόνον ὅτι  
ἐλογίσθη αὐτῷ,

μονον adv only, alone

Cf. 15:4; 1 Cor 9:10; 10:11. Paul does not deny the importance of the original context of the passages he quotes. Rather, Paul views the OT as covenant history, the history of the promises and saving acts of God which find their focus and fulfilment in Christ. All that God said and did under the Old Covenant he said and did for us, for the sake of those who are in Christ.

#### Verse 24

ἀλλὰ καὶ δι' ἡμᾶς οἷς μέλλει λογιζεσθαι,  
τοῖς πιστεύουσιν ἐπὶ τὸν ἐγείραντα  
Ἰησοῦν τὸν κύριον ἡμῶν ἐκ νεκρῶν,  
μελλω be about, intend, be destined  
λογιζεσθαι Verb, pres pass infin λογίζομαι  
ἐγείρω raise  
νεκρός, α, ον dead

Our faith, like that of Abraham, rests in a God who brings life out of death, cf. v.17. "In Abraham's case, God revealed this power in creating life in the dead womb of Sarah. For us, this power of God is manifested in his raising from the dead Jesus our Lord. Paul often describes God as the one who raised Jesus from the dead (Rom 8:11; 10:9; 1 Cor 6:14; 15:15; 2 Cor 4:14), but he rarely makes God the object of our belief. He does so here to make Christian faith as similar to Abraham's faith as possible." Moo.

"Christian faith is thus, for Paul, irrevocably resurrection-shaped... Confessing that Jesus is Lord, therefore, and that God raised him from the dead (10:9), means sharing the faith of Abraham; and that faith, as Paul has now argued, is the one and only badge of membership in Abraham's family." Wright.

#### Verse 25

ὅς παρεδόθη διὰ τὰ παραπτώματα ἡμῶν  
καὶ ἠγέρθη διὰ τὴν δικαίωσιν ἡμῶν.  
παραδιδωμι hand over, deliver up  
παραπτωμα, τοσ η sin, wrongdoing  
ἠγέρθη Verb, perf pass indic, 3 s ἐγείρω  
δικαιωσις, εως f putting into a right  
relationship (with God); setting free,  
acquittal

This verse is viewed by many as a credal formula which may possibly be pre-Pauline. Note the unusual linking of justification with the resurrection of Christ rather than his death. The first line reflects the language concerning the Suffering Servant in the LXX of Is 53, particularly v.12.

Wright argues that διὰ with the accusative means 'because of' or 'on account of'. This fits well with the first half of the verse, but what does it mean that he 'was raised because of our justification'? Having argued that Paul has in mind here Isaiah 53, Wright comments, "First, the servant of Isaiah 53 is raised to new life after his vicarious death (53:10b-12); his task then, as God's righteous one, is 'to make many righteous' (v. 11, alluded to in Rom 5:18-19). Carrying this meaning into Romans 4, as the allusion invites us to do, would suggest that Jesus' resurrection took place 'because of our justification' in the sense of 'because God intended thereby to justify us.' This is not exactly parallel in meaning to 'because of our trespasses' in the first half of the verse, unless, of course, Paul there means 'he was handed over because God intended thereby to deal with our trespasses.' But it is not necessary to insist on a strict parallelism of content." Oliver O'Donovan comments, "When St Paul in the Epistle to the Romans describes Christ as 'given up for our sins and raised for our vindication' (4:25), he has, of course, Israel's sin and vindication in mind. Fulfilling the promises that Abraham believed in, Christ represents Israel equally in both moments of the Paschal crisis, and becomes a new focus of identity for those who inherit Abraham's faith." *The Desire of the Nations*, p. 141.

### Day 480: Romans 5:1-5

#### Romans 5-8

"Paul's exposition of the gospel of Jesus Christ takes a decisive turn at 5:1. Up to this point, his focus has been on the power of the gospel to put people who are locked up in sin and under sentence of God's wrath into a right relationship with God. Through the preaching of the good news, God invites all people – Jew and Gentile alike – to believe in Christ and enter into this new relationship. Now Paul turns his attention to what comes after one's justification by faith. Chapters 5-8 focus on two matters in particular: the certainty we can have that our justification will lead to final salvation, and the new power God gives us in our continuing struggle against sin and the law.

"The first theme – what theologians call 'assurance' – dominates the first (5:1-11) and last (8:18-39) paragraphs in these chapters. These two sections frame the argument of Romans 5-8, forming what we call an *inclusio*. The famous argument about Adam and Christ (5:12-21) grounds the claim for assurance in 5:1-11. Then, in chapters 6-7, Paul deals with two continuing threats to our assurance: sin and the law. In 8:1-17 he shows how the work of God's Spirit overcomes these threats." Moo.

Wright argues that chapters 5-8 focus on the theme of *glorification*, or future glory: "The whole passage ... emphasises that what God did decisively in Jesus the Messiah is now to be implemented by the Spirit. Paul points to ways in which the Christian's present status and future hope determine life in the present, but the real theme is the secure future. All is guaranteed by the unshakable love of God – which is in turn demonstrated in the death of Jesus (5:6-10; 8:31-39). This is the argument that emerges from the surface of chaps. 5-8. "Beneath the surface, however, and poking out like the tips of a huge iceberg at various key points, there runs a different theme, not often noticed... Paul, I suggest, is telling the story of the people of the Messiah in terms of the new exodus. Jesus' people are the liberated people, on their way home to their promised land." The themes of slavery and freedom are prominent. Wright argues that Paul may have had Jer 23:5-8 particularly in mind with its themes of the Messiah, the righteousness of God and the new exodus. With Paul, the promise of the land has been refined into the promise of inheriting the whole cosmos (4:13; 8:18-25). "My proposal is that the journey that ends in chap. 8 with the glorious inheritance began in chap. 6 with the new covenant version of the crossing of the Red Sea [baptism], the event through which the slaves are set free." The reason for returning to the theme of law in chapter 7 "is that he is following the storyline. After the Red Sea, and before the journey to the promised inheritance, comes Mt Sinai and the giving of the Torah." Wright adds, "This sequence of thought is opened up initially with four paragraphs of very similar length (5:1-11, 12-21; 6:1-11, 12-23), each rounded off with a christological formula that is not just added on for effect but sums up the paragraph."

### Romans 5:1-11

Verses 1-11 focus on the hope of final salvation, see. vv 2b, 5a, 9,10. Justification is a past and present reality and also an eschatological pronouncement. Wright comments, "The first paragraph of the new section states and develops the theme that overarches the next four chapters: those whom God justified, God also glorified. In typical fashion, this is stated densely to start with (5:1-2). It is then developed with two new elements, suffering and the Spirit (5:3-5), explained and grounded (in the death of the Messiah) (5:6-9), and finally further explained and celebrated (5:10-11). As usual, Paul's successive explanations do not add new points to the opening summary, but rather explore what is contained by implication within it. "The theme is that of inaugurated eschatology. God has accomplished the justification of sinners; God will therefore complete the task, saving those already justified from the coming wrath (cf. Phil 1:6: when God begins a work, God will complete it). God's decisive disclosure of covenant faithfulness in the death of the Messiah (3:21-4:25) is now expressed in equally covenantal language, that of God's love (5:8). The argument is simple: if God loved sinners enough for the Son to die for them, God will surely complete what was begun at such cost. Those who have left Egypt will be brought to Canaan, even though suffering awaits them on the journey. Part of Christian assurance is learning to tell the story and to understand its inner logic. "... All that God said to Abraham, all that God accomplished in the Messiah, was done out of love, and designed to call out an answering love. The intimacy and ecstasy of 5:1-11 are a necessary further dimension of justification by faith."

### Verse 1

Δικαιωθέντες οὖν ἐκ πίστεως εἰρήνην ἔχομεν πρὸς τὸν θεὸν διὰ τοῦ κυρίου ἡμῶν Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ,

"Justification results in peace with God, in access to God's loving favour, and thereby, unstoppably, to the hope of glory." Wright.

δικαιωθέντες Verb, aor pass ptc, m nom pl  
δικαιω justify, acquit, declare & treat as righteous

ἔχομεν Textual evidence would seem to be stronger for the subjunctive, ἔχωμεν. However, the subjunctive does not fit well with Paul's argument or his theology. Metzger suggests that this error may have crept in at the earliest possible stage of transmission: "When Paul dictated ἔχομεν, Tertius, his amanuensis (16:22), may have written down ἔχωμεν."

εἰρήνη, ης f peace

This peace is objective in nature (see Barrett, Murray, Moo): it is not *mere* feeling, it is a state of peace instituted by God himself into which we have entered and from which the *enjoyment* of peace flows. Cf. Is 32:17-18. Wright comments, "God's justice has led to peace: the echoes of the world Paul was addressing are strong. Augustus Caesar had established the Roman *Pax*, founded on *Iustia*. His successors, enjoying among their titles 'Lord' and 'Saviour,' maintained the powerful imperial myth not least through the imperial cult. Paul is revealing to his Roman audience a different justice, a different peace, in virtue of a different Lord and a different God: the God of Abraham, the world's creator, who has now established peace 'through our Lord Jesus Christ.' This peace, the first characteristic Paul mentions of the present tense of salvation, includes the deeply personal reconciliation between each believer and the true God, but can hardly stop there; already Paul is sowing the seeds for that communal peace he longs to see come about in the whole Roman church (14:1-15:14; see esp. 14:17, 19), the work, indeed, is of 'the God of peace' (15:33; 16:20). It is this peace, embracing alike each person and the whole community, that reveals to the wider world the existence and nature of the alternative empire, set up through the true Lord, the Messiah. In one short verse Paul manages to articulate the heart of Christian personal experience and the politically subversive nature of Christian loyalty."

### Verse 2

δι• οὐ καὶ τὴν προσαγωγὴν ἐσχίκαμεν [τῇ πίστει] εἰς τὴν χάριν ταύτην ἐν ᾗ ἐστήκαμεν, καὶ καυχώμεθα ἐπ' ἐλπίδι τῆς δόξης τοῦ θεοῦ.

προσαγωγή, ης f freedom or right to enter

ἐσχίκαμεν Verb, perf act indic, 1 pl ἔχω

τῇ πίστει the evidence for inclusion is not strong. The sense is not materially altered either way.

χάρις, ιτος f grace, unmerited favour

Murray understands τὴν χάριν ταύτην as a reference to justification. The sense is perhaps more general – acceptance with God and all that flows from it. Wright says that "The metaphor envisages grace as a room into which Jesus has ushered all who believe. A room where they now 'stand,' a place characterised by the presence and sustaining love of God. Just as the Temple symbolised and actualised Israel's meeting with the gracious God, so now Jesus has effected such a meeting between his God and all who approach by faith."

ἐστήκαμεν Verb, perf act indic, 1 pl ἵστημι pf stand, stand firm

καυχώμεθα boast, boast about, take confidence in, rejoice, celebrate

ἐλπίς, ιδος f hope, ground of hope

δόξα, ης f glory

The ultimate hope is to see and share in God's glory, cf. 8:18, 21, 30; also Col 1:27. "Adam's lost glory (3:23) is regained in the Messiah: not simply dazzling beauty, but the status and task of being God's vicegerent over creation." Wright. Cf. 8:18-27.

### Verse 3

οὐ μόνον δέ, ἀλλὰ καὶ καυχώμεθα ἐν ταῖς θλίψεσιν, εἰδότες ὅτι ἡ θλίψις ὑπομονὴν κατεργάζεται,

θλίψις, εως f trouble, suffering

See 2 Cor 11:23-30; 12:9,10. The peace we have with God does not preclude suffering, cf. Jn 16:33. "This suffering, though, is to be understood as part of a larger story that again ends with hope." Wright.

εἰδότες Verb, perf act ptc, m nom pl οἶδα (verb perf in form but with present meaning) know, understand

It is not the trials themselves which are the source of joy, but they become an occasion for joy through the logic of faith expounded here. "Just as resistance to a muscle strengthens it." Moo.

ὑπομονή, ης f patience, endurance

This is not a passive quality, as we often think of *patience*; the sense is rather that of *endurance* or *continuance*, cf. 2 Thess 1:4. It is "staying put without dismay." Wright.

κατεργάζομαι accomplish, bring about

### Verse 4

ἡ δὲ ὑπομονὴ δοκιμὴν, ἡ δὲ δοκιμὴ ἐλπίδα·

δοκιμή, ης f character

δοκιμη the triedness or state of approval which is consequent upon testing. Hendriksen translates it as 'proven character', cf. 2 Cor 2:9; 8:2; 13:3; Phil 2:22.

### Verse 5

ἡ δὲ ἐλπίς οὐ καταισχύνει, ὅτι ἡ ἀγάπη τοῦ θεοῦ ἐκκέχυται ἐν ταῖς καρδίαις ἡμῶν διὰ πνεύματος ἁγίου τοῦ δοθέντος ἡμῖν,

καταισχυνω put to shame, disappoint, let down

ἀγάπη του θεου is God's love for us. The objective ground for our hope is God's love for us demonstrated in Christ and communicated to us by the Holy Spirit. However, Wright says that the ambiguity may be deliberate and that the Spirit's work of prompting in us a responsive love for God (cf. 8:28) should not be excluded. Cf. the *Shema* of Deut 6:4-5. He adds, "To realise that this love fulfils the central command of Torah is to discover oneself to be a member of the renewed people of God."

ἐκκέχυται Verb, perf pass indic, 3 s ἐκχεω and ἐκχυννω pour out

Signifies an abundant measure. "This verb is used to describe the 'pouring out' of the Spirit on the day of Pentecost (Acts 2:17-18). Paul therefore cleverly alludes to the Spirit here." Moo.

δοθέντος Verb, aor pass ptc, m & n gen s διδωμι

The gift of the Holy Spirit now is the pledge and proof of the completed salvation for which we hope (cf. Rom 8:23).