

A LIVING HOPE

THE PROVEN CHARACTER OF FAITH:

ROMANS 4:13For the promise to **Abraham and his offspring** that he would be heir of the world was not given through the law, but through the righteousness that comes by faith. **14**For if those who live by the law are heirs, faith is useless and the promise is worthless, **15**because the law brings wrath. And where there is no law, there is no transgression.

16Therefore, **the promise comes by faith**, so that it may **rest on grace** and may be guaranteed to **all Abraham's offspring**—not only to those who are of the law, but also to those who are of the faith of Abraham. He is the father of us all. **17**As it is written: “I have made you a father of many nations.” He is our father in the presence of God, in whom he believed, **the God who gives life to the dead and calls into being what does not yet exist.**

18Against all hope, **Abraham in hope believed** and so became the father of many nations, just as he had been told, “So shall your offspring be.” **19**Without weakening in his faith, he acknowledged the decrepitness of his body (since he was about a hundred years old) and the lifelessness of Sarah's womb.

~Why does it read, against all hope?

~How does God's timing affect your faith?

20Yet he **did not waver through disbelief** in the promise of God, but was strengthened in his faith and gave glory to God, **21**being **fully persuaded** that God was able to do what He had promised.

~What strengthened his faith?

~Why is this important today?

22This is why “it was credited to him as righteousness.” **23**Now the words “it was credited to him” were written not only for Abraham, **24****but also for us**, to whom righteousness will be credited—**for us who believe in Him who raised Jesus our Lord from the dead.** **25**He was delivered over to death for our trespasses and was raised to life for our justification.

~“It was credited to him as righteousness”—a non-wavering faith, content in the Living Hope of God's Fulfillment of a Promised Seed. How was Abraham content?

~Why is it important to be content in Christ?

PHIL 4:11I am not saying this out of need, for I have learned to be content regardless of my circumstances. **12**I know how to live humbly, and I know how to abound. I am accustomed to any and every situation—to being filled and being hungry, to having plenty and having need. **13****I can do all things through Christ who gives me strength.**

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~How can I stay contented in Christ when I am suffering?

2 Corinthians 12:6-10 **6**Even if I wanted to boast, I would not be a fool, because I would be speaking the truth. But I refrain, so no one will credit me with more than he sees in me or hears from me, **7**or because of these surpassingly great revelations. So to keep me from becoming conceited, I was given a thorn in my flesh, a messenger of Satan, to torment me. **8**Three times I pleaded with the Lord to take it away from me. **9**But He said to me, **“My grace is sufficient for you, for My power is perfected in weakness.”** Therefore I will boast all the more gladly in my weaknesses, so that the power of Christ may rest on me. **10**That is why, for the sake of Christ, I delight in weaknesses, in insults, in hardships, in persecutions, in difficulties. **For when I am weak, then I am strong.**

~How is Grace sufficient?

Hebrews 2:14-Jesus like His Brothers **14**Now since the children have flesh and blood, He too shared in their humanity, so that by **His death** He might **destroy him** who holds the power of death, that is, **the devil, 15and free those who all their lives were held in slavery by their fear of death.16For surely it is not the angels He helps, but the descendants of Abraham.** **17**For this reason He had to be made like His brothers in every way, so that He might become a merciful and faithful high priest in service to God, in order to make atonement for the sins of the people. **18**Because **He Himself suffered when He was tempted, He is able to help those who are being tempted.**

~How does this help my faith?

A Living Hope **1 Peter 1:3-12** **3**Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ! By His great mercy He has given us new birth into **a living hope** through **the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead**, **4**and into **an inheritance** that is imperishable, undefiled, and unfading, reserved in heaven for you, **5**who through faith are shielded by God's power for the salvation that is ready to be revealed in the last time.**6**In this you greatly rejoice, though now for a little while **you may have had to suffer grief in various trials 7so that the proven character of your faith—more precious than gold, which perishes even though refined by fire—may result in praise, glory, and honor at the revelation of Jesus Christ.** **8**Though you have not seen Him, you love Him; and though you do not see Him now, you believe in Him and rejoice with an inexpressible and glorious joy, **9**now that you are **receiving the goal of your faith, the salvation of your souls.****10**Concerning this salvation, the prophets **who foretold the grace to come to you** searched and investigated carefully, **11****trying to determine the time and setting to which the SPIRIT OF CHRIST in them was pointing when He predicted the sufferings of Christ and the glories to follow.****12**It was revealed to them that **they were not serving themselves, but YOU,** when they foretold the things now announced by those who preached the gospel to you by the Holy Spirit sent from heaven. Even angels long to look into these things.

~Contentment is achieved through the proven character of your faith which is refined by fire/testing so that we can GLORY in receiving the GOAL OF FAITH=SALVATION.