***Abraham's Faith Rest  
RO41-02***

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Please turn with me once more to Romans 4:16-18. We'll conclude this section today.

**Abraham**

In this fourth chapter of Romans, the apostle Paul has been driving home with great emphasis the fact that God saves a person by faith alone, apart from any human works, and apart from any religious rituals – even the religious rituals which God Himself may have prescribed, such as the Lord's Supper or water baptism. Abraham, we have seen, is being used by the apostle Paul as the classic example of how helpless a sinner is to secure divine blessing by his own efforts. The particular example that he has been using is the fact that Abraham was promised an heir to inherit the great blessings of the Abrahamic Covenant, which told Abraham that he would be the father of many nations, and that he would be the source of blessing to all nations through the coming of the Savior. All of that was structured upon Abraham having a son by his wife, Sarah.

As you know, the thing that happened is that they got to the point where they were too old to have children. So, Abraham is indeed a classic example of a man who has a great hope and a great need, and is completely helpless to do anything about it. In spite of all that, there is this man, nearly 100 years old, standing firm in faith rest, trusting God to somehow come through and do what He said He was going to do.

Finally, we saw in the previous session that God appeared to Abraham in the form of the pre-incarnate Lord Jesus Christ, who is a manifest person of the Trinity. Whenever God appears to a person in the form of a human being, it is always the Lord Jesus Christ. He is the person who is manifest. God the Father does not appear to people, and God the Holy Spirit does not appear to people. But the manifest person is Jehovah, the Lord Jesus Christ pre-incarnate.

So, Jehovah (Jesus Christ) appeared to Abraham and told him that one year hence this son would be born. Now indeed at last, Abraham's faith was rewarded. His name had been changed to Abraham, which meant "father of a multitude," and now he was well on his way to fulfilling indeed that characteristic.

So, against this historical background that I think you have well in mind now, the apostle Paul, in Romans 4:16-18, has pointed out that Abraham had faith in God in spite of his circumstances. He just rested, and waited for God to act on the basis of what God had promised. Paul indicates this attitude made perfect sense because of the nature of God. When Bible doctrine gives us the mind and the purpose of God for us, then there's no other course for us that makes sense but to faith rest on that information.

**Two Characteristics of God**

So, we're going to pick up our passage now in the middle of verse 17, where Paul is describing the God whom Abraham believed. He describes this God with two characteristics which are fitting for this occasion. The first one is: "Who gives life to the dead." The second one is: "And calls those things which are not as though they were." Abraham believed God's promise to make him the father of many nations. A quarter of a century indeed had passed since he left Haran with no results. Now Abraham and Sarah are both sexually dead. No heir can be born. Still, Abraham believed the promise.

**Faith**

So, Paul says that it was fitting that Abraham, with this attitude, should look upon God in two great characteristics. This is what encouraged Abraham. Abraham was not blind faith. Abraham said, "I've got a problem – a very big problem. But I can trust God because I know two things about God." Remember that faith is always based on information. It is only ignorance that believes something by blind faith. It is only ignorance that says, "Well, I'm going to have faith in faith. God never asks you to do that. God always says, "Here's the information. Here's the fact. Here's the evidence. Here's the truth. Now I've proved it. So, now you just accept it." We're always asked to believe that which is presented on the basis of truth.

**The God Who Gives Life**

So, Abraham looks upon God, and has two facts that make his faith in God sensible. Fact number one, this was the God who gives life." The Greek word is "zoopoieo." "Zoopoieo" comes from two words. It comes from a noun "zoe." The noun "zoe" means "life," but life as a principle in the absolute sense. It comes also from the verb "poieo." You can see how the word is divided into two segments. The verb "poieo" means "to make." So, you put that together, and what this word literally says is "to make life." That's what the word actually means. This is the capacity to reverse death in a creature – "to make life."

This verb is in the present tense, which means that this characteristic is always true of God. God always has the capacity to give life where there is death. It's active voice, which indicates that God Himself is the one who exercises this power. And it is a participle – a statement of a principle being given here. It has the definite article (the word "the") before the participle, which therefore indicates that the translation is: "the one who makes life.

Then it has the word "dead" ("nekros"). What this word refers to is lack of physical life. Here it's in the plural in the Greek, so it means "the dead ones." The Bible tells us that God and God alone has the power to give life. Nobody can give life. Only God can do that. Some people can fake the matter. Some people can pretend. The false prophet is going to pretend to give life to an image of the antichrist. But the Bible makes it clear that this quality of life is, to something which is dead, can only be transmitted by God.

Notice a few verses that teach us that. In Deuteronomy 32:39, we read, "See now that I (Jehovah is speaking), even I, am He, and there is no God with Me. I kill, and I make alive. I wound, and I heal. Neither is there any that can deliver out of My hand." One interesting combination here, that I hope you'll notice in this verse, is that it says, "I kill, and I make alive. I wound, and I heal." So, the power of healing includes the power of giving life. As you know, the Lord Jesus Christ, because He was God, fully demonstrated this power. He could make people well who were sick, and He did. And He could raise people to life who were dead, and He did.

**The Gift of Healing**

This is why the charismatic movement it such a joke today when it claims to have the power of healing, because the power of healing always includes the power of raising people from the dead. If you can't raise people from the dead, you don't have the power of healing because the power of healing (the gift of healing) has its ultimate expression in being able to completely heal a person who is dead. And when you're dead, you can't get in much more need of healing than that. That's about as much healing as a person needs. And the gift of healing includes that.

It's interesting that here in the Old Testament, this passage that wants to clarify to us that only God can give life. It also associates that with the fact that, consequently, God heals. Now it is true that human beings were given this gift of healing in New Testament times, until it was terminated. And that gift, when they had it, included raising people from the dead. So, the apostle Paul, in the earlier part of his ministry, when this gift was operational, could just be touched, and people would be healed. When a man fell out the window, and landed on the pavement below, and is killed, because Paul has been preaching all day long until midnight, and the fellow fell asleep in the window, Paul went down and he gave that man the ultimate healing that he needed, and he raised him from the dead.

So, there was a time when people did exercise this power, but of course, it was God exercising it through them. Nobody ever questioned that. Nobody ever discusses that. That's why, again, it is rather inane for charismatics to say, "I don't claim to heal people. It's God who heals people." Well, every idiot knows that. Nobody is discussing that. What we're discussing is that anybody should claim that God is using people to heal others in this day, or to raise people from the dead. That's what we're discussing.

So, any time a charismatic says, "Oh, I give God the glory. I don't claim to heal people. He heals them." That's just a cover-up. That's smoke screen. You just blow it back in their faces and say, "OK, we all know that. Nobody suggests that human beings can heal. The Bible makes it clear that only God can give life, and only God can give healing. But we are challenging your claim to have that gift and ability. God alone can give life.

Notice 1 Samuel 2:6: "The Lord kills, makes alive. He brings down to Sheol (the grave), and He brings up again." God puts people in the grave. God takes people back out of the grave. He alone has the power to do such a thing.

Notice in 2 Kings 5:7: "And it came to pass when the King of Israel had read the letter that he tore his clothes and said, 'Am I God, to kill and to make alive, that this man was sent unto me (to cure a man of his leprosy)? Wherefore, consider, I pray you, and see now. He seeks a quarrel against me." Naaman the Syrian has been sent to the king of Israel because he has leprosy, and the king is beside himself because he can't heal. Only God can heal. Here again, he connects: "Am I God, that I can kill and I can make alive again? God can give life. Am I God that I can give a person a terminal illness, and I can remove that illness?" Again, healing and being raised from the dead are connected together.

So, the Bible repeatedly makes it clear that God alone has the power to give life. It's because giving life requires omnipotence.

Ephesians 1:19-22 describe for us the fact that bringing life to the one who is dead demonstrates the omnipotence of God. That's what it takes. It takes omnipotence. I wouldn't want to pass by without reminding you that this is exactly what you are going to experience at the hand of the God who does make alive.

Please remember that 1 Thessalonians 4:13 describes for us how this power that God has to make alive is going to be exercised in your behalf. This again is a New Testament expression of the principle that only God has the power to give life. But this power to give life was a factor that meant a great deal to Abraham. He knew this about God. Abraham reasoned that such a God had the power even to overcome the sexual deadness of the bodies of himself and his wife, and to produce life again, though they couldn't do it. Yet, out of that death, that had entered their bodies sexually, life could yet come.

**The Sacrifice of Isaac**

Abraham believed that God was fully able to raise the dead to life. As a matter of fact, that's why Abraham had no problem by the time that Isaac was a young man and God said, "Now I want you to sacrifice the heir on an altar to Me." Abraham had no problem taking the boy and saying, "OK, let's go." He built the altar. The son had been so reared in doctrine and godliness that he did not resist his father. He had all the strength in the world. At his age, he could have easily resisted. But the son actually permitted the father the tie him and to lay him down. He knew exactly what the father was doing. And when the father raised that knife, he knew exactly where the father was aiming for. He was aiming for his throat, and he was going to slash it.

Now, Abraham did expect to kill his son. Abraham really expected to slash Isaac's throat, and to have the blood spurt out in the form of a sacrifice. But Abraham had something else in mind that Hebrews 11:19 tells us, because Abraham had this principle well in mind that Jehovah is the God who "zoopoieo." He gives life to that which is dead. Hebrews 11:17: "By faith, Abraham, when he was tested, offered up Isaac. And he that received the promises offered up his only begotten son, of whom it was said, 'In Isaac your seed shall be called,' accounting that God was able to raise him up even from the dead from which also he received him in a figure." Abraham expected to sacrifice Isaac. Abraham expected God to turn right around and raise Isaac back to life, because he knew that he was dealing with a God who can give life.

So, Abraham believed this fact. And he knew that just as God said, "I'll give you justification if you'll trust Me for it," he knew that God said, "I'll give you an heir if you'll trust Me for it." He didn't always do it like he should have, but he knew that he could trust God for it. Even when he came up against no more life capable from his body or from his wife's body, he nevertheless held on to the fact that God has the power to give life.

**The One Who Calls those Things which are not as though They were**

Well, there was the second thing that Paul adds to this characteristic that was in Abraham's mind relative to God. The first thing was: "One who gives life to the dead, and." That's our little Greek word "kai" that introduces the second feature that he had in mind. And that is: "The one who calls those things which are not as though they were." The word "calls" is the Greek word "kaleo." "Kaleo" here means "to designate." It's in the present tense, so it's a constant technique of God. God constantly designates in this way. It is active. God does it. And again, we have a participle, which indicates that we have a principal being stated here.

He designates something he calls "those things." That is a general category of things: "which are not." This is the verb "eimi," and it has the negative "me." It is present tense. This is the status of these things constantly. They are not. It is active. It is inherently the status of this category. It is a participle again – a principle being stated. Something which does not exist at the moment is what he's talking about. And God treats it "as though." This is the Greek word "hos." It's an adverb indicating the manner of God. God acts in a certain way, and that is He acts as if they were. And gain, we have the word "eimi." Again it is present tense – constantly the case. It is active. It is the status that God views this category of things. It is participle – a principle.

We can translate it in this way: "And designates the things that are not in existence as being in existence." So, what you're saying here is that Abraham realized that God had a habit of simply saying, "I'm going to do this." And from the moment God said, "I'm going to do this," God acted as if He had already done it.

Now, He has done that with you and me. He said, "I am going to glorify each of you. The ultimate end of what I'm going to do with you is glorification." He told you that He was going to call you. He's done that. He told you that He was going to save you. He's done that. He's told you He's going to sanctify you. And to the extent that you take doctrine in and are positive toward it, He's doing that. But he also told you that the end of the line is glorification. He has not done that. But He treats you as if you are a sinless person. That's what qualification means. He treats you as if you have now been released from the old sin nature. And He expects you to act accordingly, because as far as God is concerned, it's done.

So, this characteristic refers to the things that God has promised to do for Abraham, but which have not come to pass relative to this matter of having an heir. But with God, all these are, in practical effect, accomplished. It's just a matter of timing. And the prosperity of Abraham to form the Kingdom of God on earth was treated by God as if that posterity already existed. That's why it says here that He designated that posterity, which was not in existence, as if it already were in existence. So, what is non-existent at the moment, but determined by God to be, is. And that's the point. God determined for a thing to be, though it may be non-existent at the moment, but in effect, it is.

**Faith**

For Abraham, God's promise of a multitude of posterity was not merely a possibility. It was a certainty. Abraham never had any doubt that it was going to be done. His problem was how it was going to be done. That's the principle we have in Hebrews 11:1 in defining faith: "Faith is the substance of things hoped for – the evidence of things not seen." Faith makes real what does not exist, but which God says that He's going to do. So, it is your faith that makes heaven real. You've never seen it. You've never been there. You can read about what the apostle Paul gives us, and other people give us, about it. Paul was there. Faith makes heaven real. To the extent that you have this information and that you believe it – to that extent, heaven is a real place to you. It is that trusting and believing in God that gives reality to what you do not have at the moment.

**Proof**

So, Abraham had a faith which was fully compatible with reason. His faith in God rested on proof, not wishful thinking. What proof? Proof number one: only God can give life. Abraham had that information. Abraham said, "I'll stand on that. He had proof number two: God calls things as being so even though they are not so, simply because he says, "That's how I'm going to do it. Therefore, it's as good as done." Abraham said, "I know that that's true about God." Therefore, Abraham says, "That's all I need. So, I act upon that."

**Inerrancy**

There are two critical facts here. And I cannot stress enough that authentic saving faith (real faith that'll get you to heaven) only exists as a response to proof. And you can only have proof when you have a book that is a book that can carry proof – a book that can carry the authority that the Bible has, because it is without error. That's why the doctrine of inerrancy is being so attacked by Satan today. If you can establish in the minds of people that the Bible cannot be trusted, then you have destroyed all ground of proof, and then Satan knows no one can be saved. Nobody can be saved unless they believe in something that has been proven to them – not something they hope. Only when a thing is proven to you, then you can be saved.

So, genuine faith in the New Testament sense, consequently, includes certainty. In the New Testament sense, you cannot say, "I just don't know whether I'm going to heaven. I hope I am." The minute you said that, you told us you're not going to heaven. You're not born again, because you have not believed in something that has been proven to you. If it has been proven to you, you have no doubt about it. And unless you can establish that your faith is in something in which you have no doubt, you're not believing in any proof that's going to take you to heaven. And if you have believed in that which has been proven to you, then you'll have no doubt about it. You won't go around saying, "Yeah, I hope I'm going to go to heaven." Anytime somebody says that, that means, "I hope I'm doing enough good words to outweigh my bad ones. I hope I'm being good enough most of the time that God will accept me."

**Works**

Of course, immediately you're talking about works, works, works. And immediately, you have undermined the principle of grace for salvation.

So, genuine New Testament faith includes the element of certainty – the assurance of salvation. Hebrews 11:13 says, "These all died in faith." He is talking about Abraham, Sarah, Noah, and all of these people who preceded here in this chapter: "These all died in faith, not having received the promises, but having seen them afar off, and were ..." what? "Persuaded of them. And they embraced them, and they confessed that they were strangers and pilgrims on this earth."

Abraham never had title deed to that Promised Land, but with Abraham, it was his, because God says that it's his. Abraham couldn't pass on to Isaac, his son, the inheritance of the land as official title possessor. But Abraham said to his son, Isaac, "I'm giving you the land, because God has given it to me. It's ours. It's as good as done. Somewhere along the line, the people who now occupy this (which must be our enemies), will be driven out. It will be our land. We'll have full legal title to it. These people were persuaded. Persuaded on the basis of what? Persuaded on the basis of the proof that was given to them in the character of God.

So, please remember that genuine faith, in the New Testament sense, means assurance of salvation. When you talk to a person who's not sure he's going to heaven, you better tell them, "Hey, friend, you're going to hell. And you better straighten it out as fast as you can. Find yourself the authority of Scripture. Find what God has done. Find the basis, and get your faith where God can give you justification.

The same characteristic is in evidence in reference to the land of Palestine. The promises to this land that God gave to Abraham demonstrate that this is a God who calls things as so which just at the moment are not so.

In Genesis 15, for example, the Holy Spirit takes the trouble very interestingly to tell us exactly who is in the land. God says, "Abraham, this is your land. I'm giving it to you." But notice Genesis 15:18-21 says, "In the same day, the Lord made a covenant with Abraham, saying, "Unto your seed I have given this land from the river of Egypt unto the great river, the River Euphrates. The Kenites, and the Kenizzites, and the Kadmonites, and the Hittites, and the Perizzites, and the Rephaims, and the Amorites, and the Canaanites, and the Girgashites, and the Jebusites."

These were the people who are in the land. Every one of them was Hamitic. These were all Hamitic people. And the world at one time was dominated by people who descended from Noah's son Ham. They were the great inventors. They were the great producers of technology in the ancient world. And the Hamites were the dominant race in all the earth. They possessed the earth.

Now God comes along, and He names a part of the world, and it's loaded with Hamites, And God says to Abraham, "It's yours." And the Hamites weren't about to give it up. But the helmets were driven out. Then the descendants of Noah's son Japheth took over. That is the group that you and I belong to, The Japhetic people took over, and they now dominate the world. It is the Japhetic people who are the rulers of the earth, and who are the leading nations of the earth, and who are the power structures of the earth. But the Japhetics are going to be driven out. Finally, the by the Shemites, the descendants of Noah's son Shem, through Abraham, are going to be the rulers of the world. And they will be the dominant controlling factor.

So, indeed, God is not kidding even in the land. The Jews are going to inhabit Palestine. It is their Promised Land, even though when He gave it to them, Hamites dominated that territory. They don't today, and they won't in the future. Faith never looked at the obstacles. Faith only looks at God. Please remember that the barriers that Satan puts up between us and God are only paper walls. If you push against them, you'll find you tear right through. And that's what state likes to do.

We do this in our stage productions here. We had one at one time not so long ago where I walked in here, and I wondered how in the world they built that stone wall at the back of the stage here. It was just as interesting a stone wall as you could imagine. And one day a kid went through it. It was just paper. That's how Satan's barriers are. They're just paper. Remember that this is a God who says that a thing is so when it isn't. That makes it so.

Verse 18: "Who against hope believed in hope." The word "who" refers to Abraham. "Against" is the preposition "para," which means "contrary to." We're going to look at that in a moment again. "Hope" is "elpis." That means "the favorable and confident expectation." Here this refers to Abraham's hope of having a multitude of posterity via a son by Sarah. Abraham and Sarah's physical condition left no hope for an heir or posterity. So, that's what it means. This was contrary to any natural hope that they had of having a son. What did he do? He turned around and he believed God ("pisteuo"). There's that famous word. It means "trusting God." It is aorist. He did this at a point in time. Aorist tense means a point in time. At what point? He trusted God at the point when he couldn't have a son. Now that's really believing God. It's active. It's the faith that Abraham himself exercised toward God's promise. It's indicative – a statement of fact.

Then we have another preposition "in." We've had one "against" hope. He believed in hope. This is the preposition "epi," which means "on the basis of." It indicated the ground of Abraham's hope. The ground was Abraham's faith being exercised in God's character – that God would produce. God engendered this hope in Abraham.

So, Abraham, who against what he could see – that he had no hope, yet acted with hope because God had built it up in him. These two prepositions that we've looked at: "against" ("para"); and, "in" ("epi") are actually going in opposite directions. "Against hope" goes in one direction. "In hope" goes in the other direction. "Against hope" has to do with the fact that it is looking at the impossibility of procreation by Abraham and Sarah. That's going in one direction. "In hope" looks to God's power to give life, and God's faithfulness to His word, and that's going in the opposite direction.

So, we can translate this in two ways. One: "Who, contrary to hope, believed on the basis of hope:" "Who, contrary to what he could see, believed on the basis of what God told them." Or, we can say: "Who, being beyond hope, could not bear children upon the basis of hope (that God had raised within him), still believed." He did not fall short. The word "that" is "eis," indicating purpose. He believed against hope. That is what he believed: "He might become the father of many nations, according to what had been spoken to him." He might be the father of many nations according to that which was spoken. And the word "spoken" is the word "lego." It is in the perfect tense, which indicates this was in the past in Ur of the Chaldees. And he continued to believe this all along. It is passive. The promise was spoken by God. Abraham didn't make it up. It is participle – a principle stated.

The word "so" is "houtos:" "Thus shall be," and this is it – the hope that he had: "So shall your seed be:" "Thus shall your seed be." The Greek word is "sperma," which indicates his descendants. "Shall be" is again "eimi." This time it is future. In the future it's going to be. It is middle. You will benefit by it. It is indicative – a statement of fact.

**Faith Rest**

What we have been describing, as we close this section, is the faith rest principle. What was it that Abraham demonstrated in such a magnificent way? It was the quality of faith rest. Faith rest is the practice of believing God's promises, and relaxing in the confident expectation of their fulfillment by Him. Faith rest on the part of the believer is a great expression of your respect for God's character, and your confidence in His Word when He has spoken. And consistent faith rest is a sign of advanced spiritual capacity.

I can't go to into this doctrine today, but I will observe this one point – that faith rest indicates advanced spiritual maturity. The Christian who is always wringing his hands, and the Christian who is always on the edge, and the Christian who is always eating his heart out, and the Christian who is always worried about how things are going to go for him, is a Christian who is a baby. But when you develop enough spiritual maturity, you find that faith rest becomes your natural attitude toward God.

So, this is a pretty good test for just how far you've gone. God had made a promise to Abraham, and Abraham is a classic example of faith rest. He believed the promise, and thereafter, the issue of his life was just sitting around waiting for God to do what He said.

However, there were times when Abraham did not face this problem, as you know. This was evidenced by the fact that when he left Ur of the Chaldees, he only went as far as Haran. He went part-way up, and then for several years (we don't know why), he hung around there. He never had the blessing of God until he left Haran. We have the lack of faith rest when famine hit the land of Canaan. Instead of trusting God to give him food, he barreled on down to Egypt. And then when he got there, he passed Sarah off as a sister to Pharaoh to protect himself, and had her taken into Pharaoh's harem, and practically got a real problem involved there that God had to step in and resolve. That was not faith rest it.

Certainly he was not in faith rest when he listened to Sarah and took Hagar as his wife in order to get a son, and sure enough, he did secure Ishmael, whom the Bible describes as a wild donkey of a man. And the Arabs, who have descended from him, are wild donkeys of men to this day. That was lack of faith that created that whole fouled-up situation. But nevertheless, when Abraham functioned on faith rest, he was one magnificent guy. And God really, really was fond of this man. James 2:23 tells us that God had an attitude toward Abraham that He did not have toward a lot of people. He called Abraham his friend. James says, "Abraham was the friend of God." The reason he was such a friend of God was because he operated on the faith rest principle.

Let's tie it up by turning to Hebrews 4 where this basic concept is laid out for us. Hebrews 4:1: "Let us therefore appear lest the promise being left us of entering into His rest, any of you would seem to come the short of it." This verse warns against failing to realize God's promise to bring your soul to rest in peace. Most people move through life with a lot of anxieties. The context of this particular refers to the Exodus generation – the people who were brought out of slavery in Egypt. They are used as the example of what happens when you do not trust God to do what He said He is going to do. Not trusting God creates the conditions of fear; mental disorientation; unhappiness; and, human viewpoint solutions by the barrelful.

**A Sabbath Rest**

God offers a condition of repose for those who are His children, no matter what your external circumstances are. This verse uses the word "rest," which is the Greek word "katapausis," and it means the state of repose. It is not God's purpose that you should always go through life distraught by the situation. It is God's purpose that you go through life in a state of repose. Hebrews 4:9 also uses the word "rest:" "There remains, therefore, a rest to the people of God. It identifies a little more what He means by this rest, because it uses a different Greek word. It uses the word "sabbatismos," which you can readily see is the word for "Sabbath," and it means "a Sabbath rest." So, God has for his people a Sabbath-like rest.

Now what this means is that when God finished creating the world, He entered a period where He leaned back in repose. He ceased from His creation works. So, we are to cease from the works of our old sin nature, and we are to lean back and relax in God's happiness. The rest here, in Hebrews 4:1, is specifically in reference to our destiny in eternity, but the principle applies to everything that we do in life.

Verse 2 says, "For unto us was the gospel preached, as well as unto them, but the Word preached did not profit them, not being mixed with faith in them that heard. So, what we have here is the fact that Old Testament people had the same gospel information that we do. They had it in visual form, but they did have the Word of God relative to salvation. The promise of justification and of God's heavenly rest was believed by Abraham. So, he entered this Sabbath-like rest in his soul. The promise of eternal rest in heaven was no benefit to most of the Jews because they did not believe it. They did not have faith in the Word of God.

The Exodus generation was a prime example. God said, "I'm going to lead you into land." They groused and they grumbled. They said, "We're never going to make it." Finally, He brought them right to the port of entry at Kadeshbarnea, and He said, "Now we're ready to go in." And they said, "No, we can't go in. Those people are terrible. They'll kill us. They'll slaughter us. We can't make it." Got said, "I'll going to be with you. I'll take care of you." They refused to go on His promise, and they never entered the rest of the Promised Land. They died out in the wilderness over the next 40 years.

Now, what's the key? It is this word "not being mixed." The word "not being mixed" is the Greek word "sugkerannumi." "Sugkerannumi" means "to be united with" or "to blend together with." This is what a wife does when she puts things in a blender. She puts various things in and turns the motor on. She "sugkerannumi" the stuff together. She blends it together. The key factor was that here was the promise of God on one side, but that promise had to have something mixed with it in order that the result would be repose of soul. Here is the promise of God here, and it had to be mixed with faith. And the result would be repose of the soul. That's the formula.

These people missed it completely. The Exodus Jews failed to unite something here with this promise. And we're going to see in a moment that that something was faith. It is perfect tense. In the past, when they heard the promise, they continued not to mix faith. It is passive. The promise doesn't work unless something is done to it by the individual. And that something is faith. There's our word again: "pistis." They did not mix trust. This was the factor that was the key to peace in the soul. The same thing is true for you and me.

If Abraham had not mixed faith with the covenant promise, he'd have gotten exactly nothing. The Exodus generation did not follow Abraham's example, and they got exactly nothing. They never got into the land. That's what Hebrews 4:6 tells us: "Seeing, therefore, remains that some must enter into it. And they to whom it was first preached did not enter in because of unbelief. That's why they lost out.

Verse 3: "For we who have I believed do enter into rest. As He said, "If I have sworn in My wrath, if they shall enter into My rest: although the works were finished from the foundation of the world." What that verse is saying is that mixing faith with the promises of God brings rest with God in salvation and in daily living. This is what we mean by the faith rest principle. Here is where the term comes from. Here is the basic idea. It expects God to be true to His Word, and that results in peace in the soul.

Faith rest provided Abraham with uninterrupted repose most of the time. When he stepped out of faith rest, he got in trouble. The rest of the time he was great.

So, what do you want to do? Learn the promises of God. Look to the plan that He has for you. Learn the promises of the Word, and then expect Him to fully perform them. Faith rest means looking to the grace of God to do in your life what you cannot choose for yourself. It means abandoning your own works. Hebrews 4:10 says, "For he that has entered into his rest, he also has ceased from his own works, as God did from His. So, knock off the old sin nature works, and don't copy the losers of the Exodus generation. Stand at ease on the promises of God.

Abraham's hopeless condition could have resulted in bitterness and in resentment toward God. Instead, this great man ended up with faith rest.

So, this technique is a great technique, but you're going to have to grow up a little to use it. I want to remind you that it's not an emergency technique. It's not something you use when you're in a crisis. It's not something you use when your back is to the wall, and you don't know which way you're going to go, and then you say, "OK, God, I'm going to trust You to do this." This is what you do in prosperity, not just in adversity. This is the normative attitude of the Christian's outlook toward God.

Now, I realize that the world holds this in contempt. The world has a cute little principle which goes like this: "God helps those who help themselves." Baloney! God helps those who faith rest on the basis of His promise. That is those who God helps.

**Hebrews 4:12**

All of this is based upon the fact that we have access to that promise – to that doctrine of the Word of God. Here, in Hebrews 4:12, you have that famous verse: "For the Word of God is living and powerful and sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing even through the dividing asunder of soul and spirit, and of the joints and the marrow, and to the discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart." It is this information that gives you the ground for faith rest.

**Bible Doctrine is Powerful**

This is faith in what? Faith in facts – not in some idiotic wishful thinking, or some hopeful, rosy possibility. This is fact that the Word of God has given you. That's what you're resting upon. And you can do that because notice what this verse tells us about the Bible. It tells us that: "The Bible is living." Bible doctrine has inherent life in it because it is God's Word. It is the mind of Christ delivered through the Words of God the Holy Spirit. It says, "It is powerful." That means that it has operating power which produces changes in your soul. That's why we tell you that when you've taken in Bible doctrine, it will affect your soul. It will affect your world. It will affect your thinking. It will affect your emotions without you doing anything. Just the intake of doctrine will do that, because it is powerful.

That's what this word means in the Greek. It has the ability to change the soul. This passage tells us that: "It is sharper. It has the ability to cut through surface pretenses to the issues of sin that are within us: "And it is piercing." And it explains this is having the power to penetrate the immaterial part of your being: your soul; and, your spirit, and to show you what your real psychological quality is.

**The Discerner**

Then finally: "It is the discerner." That means that it is the judge of what a person's motivations really are. So, now that you've got the Word of God, you've got it all right there. You've got this living thing. You've got life itself, because it is God's Word, not man's decrepit thinking. You've got a powerful thing that's going to make changes in your soul, and thus in the expression of your life. It has a sharpness to it that will cut right through, and show where the sin is in your life. It'll even go to dividing the psychological factors of your immaterial being in your soul and spirit, and show where you stand there. And best of all, it'll show you where you're conning yourself and trying to con people. It's a discerner. It'll call you for a faith where you are. And it'll identify for you the things that are keeping you from faith resting in God.

Abraham was a terrific man, because he knew the principle of faith rest. And it made him a name that all the world reveres today. And through him, and through this quality that he exercised, you and I are going to heaven, because through his posterity, the Lord Jesus Christ, we have the eternal life that only He could provide. May we emulate Abraham and his faith rest.

Dr. John E. Danish, 1977

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