***Abraham's Stability of Faith
RO42-01***

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We are studying Romans 4:19-25. Our subject that we now take up is "Faith Unmovable."

**The Book of Romans**

Let’s begin with a little bit of orientation. Paul's main topic in this section of the book of Romans that we are in, which is Romans 3:21 through Romans 8:39, is salvation. The thing he's talking about is being saved – having absolute righteousness credited to the account of a sinner. Since Romans 3:21, we've been looking at that topic of salvation, and we'll continue doing that until the end of chapter 8.

We are now in this big section on a smaller unit which deals with the doctrine of justification. That covers Romans 3:21 through Romans 5:21. So, we're right in the middle of the section on the topic of justification.

The end of chapter 4, that we are now going to take up, begins to make a transition to the next main subject which we'll be looking at in this topic of salvation, and that is sanctification. So, beginning with chapter 6, we're going to enter that magnificent portion of the book of Romans that tells you how to be a godly person. If you thought that we have looked at something important thus far, and obviously we have, on this issue of how to be saved, you are really going to be thrilled on the importance of what comes next on how to be a godly person; how to be a winner as a Christian; and, how to be a winner, not only now as a Christian, but how to be a person who discovers that he's a winner when he gets to heaven because treasuries have been stored in heaven.

Many people who are winners on the issue of salvation are monumental losers on the issues of storing treasures in heaven, and of the rewards that should await us when we get into heaven. So, there are many important and tremendous things coming in this book.

**Grace**

Paul has made the point again and again that salvation is entirely by the grace of God, as a gift of God, and that the only way a person can secure eternal life is by faith in God's provision through Jesus Christ. It is not by works or any rituals. He has hammered again and again at this point, and it is a very critical point. This is where many people miss the boat completely.

Perhaps you've had the occasion of running into a person that is fearful concerning his relationship to God. People just aren't sure of what is going to happen when they face God. This, strangely enough, happens sometimes with Christians themselves. Suddenly, you find a Christian who is just all on edge because he's really not sure what awaits him out in eternity. Well, one of the reasons for this is that the person does not understand this point that Paul has been trying to make here – that the only way a person is saved is by a divine provision from God, with people keeping their cotton-picking, dirty, sin-filled hands off the thing. You're only saved by what God gives you and not by what you produce. And if there's any doubt about salvation, it's because you've been dabbling into God's provision, instead of accepting a gift from Him. So, Paul is trying to drive home that it's only by faith.

**Works**

The other part of that problem is the fact that if you mix work into the picture, then you have neutralized the grace system, and then you have neutralized salvation entirely. More and more, it becomes evident, and has become evident in this section, that there are going to be millions of people now who have missed the boat. I have no doubt that there are going to be millions of people who fully expect to go to heaven who are going to discover that they're going to hell when they die. And the reason for it is because they've been trapped in some system that interjected a human work as part of the plan of salvation – some system that said, "Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and confess your sins;" some system that said, "Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and accept water baptism;" some system that said, "Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and perform a religious ritual like circumcision;" or, some system that said, "Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and keep the Ten Commandments."

That will send you straight into hell if you do that. Some people say, "Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and keep the golden rule." That will send you straight to hell. Some say, "Keep the Ten Commandments and be a moral person." That will send you straight into hell." If you believe on the Lord Jesus Christ and do anything else, you've destroyed the ground of your salvation. This is serious business, and it is obviously not preached as much and as powerfully, and as pointedly as it should be. We know that because there resides out in Christendom the Pollyanna attitude: "Well, you know, God knows my heart. God knows my intent. God knows how sincere I am. He's not going to hold it against me that I'm not doing it on the only way that He says that He will give me salvation. He'll understand."

This is the same thing with the charismatics with their delusion about speaking in tongues and healing, and all that tripe. More than once I've had them say to me, "Do you mean to tell me that God would let all these millions of people who are in the charismatic movement be so deluded by Satan? Oh, I can't believe that He would let us be deluded like that. He would not permit sincere people, who are trying to give Him the praise, to be so deluded by Satan if what is happening with them is not true."

Well, I'm here to tell you that you can just bet that that's exactly the way a God of righteousness, and of order, and of justice will act. He will permit the charismatics and the Pentecostalist (as He does) to be monumentally deluded because they have rejected the only anchor point that God has for a human being, and that is Bible doctrine. If you do not stand with doctrine, and stick with doctrine, and stay with it dogmatically, Satan will deceive you. He will destroy your salvation if he can. And if he can't interject works and undermine that, he will destroy your rewards in heaven. He'll destroy your spirituality.

**Abraham**

That's what Paul is really trying to drive home. At the end of chapter 4, he comes back to Abraham once more, starting at verse 19, where we begin today, and he says, "Now look. Let's look at it once more. Let's take it from the start. Let's take it from the top, and let's get it straight. And let's hammer it home so that there's no doubt about it. The Jews were looking upon Abraham as the greatest of all their progenitors, which indeed he was. And they were trying to say that this man was saved by some good works which he performed. And Paul is saying: "You're not a follower of Abraham at all, because if there's one thing that Abraham didn't get from God, it was anything by his works. Whatever he got from God, it was by his faith." Abraham secured absolutely nothing from God by his works, but he secured everything from God by his faith.

**Sexual Deadness**

For that reason, Paul has indicated to us that Abraham is the father of all Jews and gentiles who genuinely are born-again through faith, apart from works. Abraham knew doctrine. He knew what God had told him. He knew the Word of God, and he acted accordingly. He knew that God was the giver of life. Paul has pointed that out. So, he knew that God's promise to him of becoming the father of many nations was a perfectly legitimate promise that would be fulfilled in spite of the fact that Abraham was sexually dead, and totally incapable of having a son. He knew that God treats as existing reality what God has promised to do.

Consequently, the fact that Abraham had no heirs made no difference to Abraham. When the subject was brought up, he said, "That's all right. I don't care. All I know is that God says, 'I'm going to be the father of many nations,' and that's what I'm going to be." People would say, "But you don't have a son." Abraham would say, "I don't care. That's beside the point. I don't even want to discuss it. It's not an issue."

Why can he say that? Because he knew that God is the kind of a God who, when He says, "This is what's going to be," that's what is, even before it is – before the reality has taken place. Everything came to him by the grace of God. And Abraham received, consequently, eternal life through faith, and he expected to receive the details of that promised blessing of the covenant made to him by God in the same way. Abraham believed God's promise that he would be the progenitor of many nations. His hope was based entirely on God's Word to him. We call it Bible doctrine.

He had this hope in spite of the circumstances which, the Bible points out, were hopeless. And Abraham responded to his circumstances with faith rest, which in the Old Testament was the highest expression of spiritual maturity. Today, the highest expression of spiritual maturity is to be filled with God the Holy Spirit. And we are filled with God the Holy Spirit as believers when all known sins are confessed. That is the highest expression of spirituality, and the highest expression of spiritual well-being. The highest expression of spirituality in the Old Testament was not the filling of the Spirit, because they did have that. The highest expression was faith rest. A man and a woman who stood and who functioned on faith rest was acting in the highest traditions of godliness. So, Abraham was right up there at the top, because faith rest is what be characterized him.

Now, the apostle Paul gives us this final summary in verse 19-25 of Abraham's phenomenal faith in God – the faith that accomplished everything, apart from any human being. He describes the consequences to Abraham once more, to be sure we understand this, and then he points out the significance of this to us today.

**Faith**

Verse 19: "And not being weak in faith, he did not consider his own body, now dead (when he was about 100 years old); neither yet the deadness of Sarah's womb." Let's look at the exegesis (the explanation) of the Greek text first, because we're going to have to straighten out some things on this verse.

It begins with the word "and" which is our old friend "kai," the conjunction which here indicates a continuation in the narration: "And not being weak." The words "being weak" are as follows in the Greek: "astheneo." "Astheneo" means to lack strength. It has in the Greek a negative with it – the negative "me." "Me" indicates now that he was not lacking in strength. And the object of this verb "astheneo" (the thing that he was not lacking in) was "pistis" which is the word for "faith." Abraham was not lacking in faith. Actually, the idea is "in the sphere of faith."

Now, this verb "being weak" ("astheneo") is in the aorist tense. Aorist is the tense that looks at everything as a point. So, it looking at Abraham's life as a whole, that's the significance of the aorist tense here. Abraham's life as a whole was not weak in faith. This was a strong man in faith. It is active. It was Abraham's choice to trust God implicitly. It is a participle because it is describing a basic characteristic of Abraham's character.

Since it is an aorist participle, that tells us something else. This "not being weak" is an aorist participle. That gives us the time factor. That tells us the order of things. The "not being weak if faith," because it is an aorist participle, tells us that that quality in Abraham came before the main verb of this sentence, which is that he considered his own body – not being weak in faith, before he considered something about his body, namely that it was dead.

So, first, Abraham, because he was not weak in faith, could look at the fact that he was incapable of having children, and come out with a certain response. If he had not been strong in faith to begin with, and then looked at the condition of his body, he would have been devastated. Instead, because he was not weak in faith, first – he was a man who trusted and who believed God. Then he could take the circumstances of his life. Then he could look at his situation of hopelessness and react to it in a godly way. He never could have done if, first of all, he was not a man who was not weak in faith.

So, Abraham viewed his procreative condition only in the light of his absolute strong faith in God's promise. You notice that he did look at it. He didn't pretend that something was not so. He didn't pretend that his inability to engage in sexual relations to produce the child was a temporary condition. He didn't pretend that Sarah's complete barrenness birth, and now past capacity to bear child, was a temporary aberration that was going to pass, and that it was going to get better. It would get OK. You looked at it, and he said, "That's the way it is." From a human point of view, it is a hopeless condition. And yet, he could look at that and not come out with a wrong response, because, first of all, he was not a man who was weak in faith.

"And being not weak in faith, he considered." The word "considered" is "katanoeo." "Katanoeo" means "to perceive clearly." This part of the verb, "kata," is a preposition added to the verb. The preposition intensifies the idea. It gives an emphasis. That's why we say "to understand fully" or "to perceive very clearly."

You have this word used many times in the Bible. For example, we have it in Matthew 7:3 and in Luke 6:41, where it speaks about perceiving clearly the beam in your own eye before you go to take a speck out of somebody else's eye – the big problem that you have in your life, before you get up in a frap over a smaller problem (a considerably insignificant problem), in comparison to your problem, that you see in someone else. It's the same word. Look at the thing carefully. Face up to what you are before you try to correct somebody else's problem.

We have this same word in reference to looking at the ravens in Luke 12:24, and looking at the lilies of the field in Luke 12:27, in order to observe carefully how God takes care of His creation, which is doomed to die; to blossom; and, to grow, or which is just animal life in comparison to realizing how He would take care of us who are made in His image.

It is used of Peter when he saw that sheet coming down of unclean animals. We were told that he was to perceive clearly. He was to look carefully at what was on that sheet, and that she was full of animals that they were forbidden to eat. Now God said, "Start eating," in order to convey the fact that God is the one who decides what is acceptable and what is not acceptable. And in this particular case, the point was that gentiles, who were viewed as unclean by Jews, were acceptable with God. And, therefore, they were part of the church body, and Cornelius was led into salvation with his household.

In Hebrews 10:24, we have this word used in the general admonition to ourselves that it is worth remembering in our dealings with one another as Christians: "And let us consider (and there's the word)." It means, "Let us look carefully ("katanoeo"), in detail: "Let us look carefully at one another to provoke unto love and to good works." Christians are to look at each other in enough detail and enough clarity to say, "I can encourage this person to perform good works in this direction. I see that here's a gift. Here's a talent. Here is a willingness. I can move this person in a good direction. I can move him in the direction of blessing. I can look at this person, and I can deal with this problem in such a way as to move toward a spirit of responding in love. So, Christians are to look at each other to seek how to move each other toward an attitude of mental attitude love, and of performing genuine divine good works. Unless you take the trouble to look at a person closely enough, you won't know how to be able to do that. You won't perceive when the opportunity to do that arises.

So, this word means "to understand fully" or "to perceive clearly."

**A Possible Transcription Problem**

Now, Abraham, we are told, considered something very fully. I have to point out now a problem that we have in the Greek text. If you have a King James Bible in front of you, the translation says, "And he considered not his own body now dead." Here is one of those places where we have a great variation in the original Greek manuscripts that have come down to us with copies of Scriptures. That is because a substantial (and an authoritative important number of them) do not have this negative "not" in the text. Others do. And it is so divided that it is really difficult to decide: was this in the original when Paul wrote this, or was this not?

However, it really doesn't make too much difference either way that you take it – whether you take it that the "not" was originally put in there by the Holy Spirit, or that the "not" was put in by some scribe later on who thought it would make more sense. Scribes sometimes had a way of doing that. They would interject words because they thought it would make more sense in the reading.

However, what Paul is pointing out here is not affected really either way. If you take it with the negative, then what this verses saying is that Abraham did not take into account his sexual deadness in his positive response to God's promise of an heir. If this is the case, it simply says that he didn't pay any attention to the fact that God said, "You'll have an heir," and yet he couldn't have an heir. He couldn't bear children. Neither he nor his wife could procreate.

On the other hand, you could take it without the negative, and there seems to be a little more weight toward that – that the negative should not be in there. And if you have a revised translation, you will notice that they generally do not put the negative in there. If it is without the negative, as it probably was originally, then Abraham is simply actually facing up to the problem of his sexual deadness without it affecting his response to God's promise of an heir.

So, what verse 19 actually says is: "And because of the fact that Abraham, as a whole in his life, was not weak in trusting God, he viewed carefully his own body, now dead." That is significant. He faced up to the fact of the sexual deadness. This word "considered" in the aorist tense, which means, again, at the point they were past the age and situation of childbearing: "He did not consider not his own body." The word "body" is the Greek word 'soma.' And that refers to his physical body: "which was now." The word "now" is this Greek word "ede." "Ede" means "already" or "at that moment." It stresses an immediate presence in contrast to some other time. And actually, you can almost translate it as: "as good as."

"And being not weak in faith, he perceived carefully his own physical body as good as dead." The word "dead" is actually a verb: "nekroo," and it means "to put to death." This refers to the sexual death of Abraham's body. It is the perfect text, which indicates that he considered not that his body had (in the past) passed a certain point because of old age where he could no longer participate in procreation. And now, at nearly 100 years of age, this is the condition that exists. It is in the passive, naturally, because this was done by old age to Abraham's body. He didn't do it to himself. It's a result of his age. It's a participle. A principle is stated – a fact of life. He looked at his own body, now dead, when he was about 100 years old. This word is "huparcho." And "huparcho" means "to exist."

So, the idea is when he existed in this condition, it was something that was a status of Abraham. It was a constant fact of life with him now at this point in his life – that there was no possibility of children: "When he was about," and the Scriptures used this word "pou," which means "almost" or "close to." It qualifies the word 100 years. He wasn't quite 100 years old. He was really 99 at the time, but he was well up in 99. He was moving toward 100 years of age.

"He, not being weak in faith, looked closely at his own body (which was now sexually dead) at a point in time when he was almost 100 years old. Then: the words "neither yet" are not in the text. They should be crossed out, because the word that's translated as "neither" here is really the word "kai." It just adds that word again, which is the word for "and:" when he was about 100 years old.

**The Deadness of Sarah's Womb**

The other thing that he looked at carefully, while not being weak in faith, is the deadness of Sarah's womb." The word "deadness" is "necrosis," which means the state of death here relative to Sarah's procreation ability. And the Scripture says that the deadness was specifically in her "metra," which is the womb, which is related to the word for "mother" ("meter"). Sarah's procreative system, in other words, was completely shut down. She was unable to conceive.

**Stability of Faith**

Now, verses 20-21 give us an insight into the tremendous stability of Abraham's faith. When you read a story like this, it almost becomes kind of silly, if not tiresome, how often you hear uncertainties expressed by Christians: "Oh, I wonder if I'm doing the right thing. I wonder if I should do this. Oh, I wonder if this is the thing that I really should do. Oh, I don't know what I'm doing with my life:" Uncertainty, uncertainty, uncertainty. When you read a story (a record) of the experience of Abraham, and there's one thing that comes through, and that's stability. Nobody was standing around Abraham, listening to him whine about uncertainties as to where he was going with his life. That just shows spiritual immaturity, and lack of communication and contact with God.

Verse 20 actually explains what is at the beginning of verse 19: the words "and being not weak in faith." Verse 19 begins: "And being not weak in faith." Verse 20 now goes on to explain, in both a negative way and a positive way, how it is that Abraham was not weak in faith. First, we have the negative description. He was not weak in faith because "he did not stagger. This is the Greek word "diakrino." "Diakrino" means "to waver." Again you have a preposition here put at the beginning of a verb. This word "dia" indicates the idea of "between." So, when you add it to this verb "diakrino," the idea that comes through is that he did not fluctuate between two mental attitudes. It was not characteristic of Abraham to flop between belief in God and not believing in God – between believing God and doubting God.

Now, that is the characteristic of many, many Christians. Sometimes they believe God, and sometimes: "Yeah, I'm not so sure." Sometimes they believe God and they've got confidence, and sometimes they just don't know where it's all at. This is a very painful condition of mind, but it was never characteristic of Abraham. Abraham was not sure on how God was going to fulfill the promise of an heir, and he got in a little trouble by fooling around and trying to help God do that. But there was never, from the moment that God revealed Himself to Abraham in Ur, and told him what He was going to do for him, there never was a moment when Abraham fluctuated toward unbelief relative to this promise. Once God had said it, accepted it, and there never was a doubt in his mind that that is the way it was going to be.

So, that's what "diakrino" means: he did not waver. He did not fluctuate between mental attitudes of belief and unbelief. This is stressed because this word has with it the negative "ou," which is the strongest negative in the Greek language. Absolutely, he did not waver. He never doubted that God was going to give the heir to fulfill the promise. The question was only: how? There was no wavering and no doubting.

**Rewards in Heaven**

Now why was that possible? Well, that was possible because the doctrine in the soul of Abraham was fully capable of meeting the hopelessness of his circumstances. And the same is true for you and me. That's why, in Ephesians 4:14, the apostle Paul says that: "We henceforth be no more children, tossed to and fro, and carried about with every wind of doctrine by the slight of men and cunning craftiness by which they lie in wait to deceive." You and I, as Christians, are constantly being bombarded by some hotshot who comes along with a great, new, wonderful way to do God's work. You are unable to be a dogmatic kind of believer, which is the only kind that God says is ultimately going to be productive of the finest divine good production, and the greatest rewards in heaven.

The people who are going to be the richest in heaven are the people who are able to respond to the hotshot with the new idea: "You're right;" or, "You're wrong." And you do it just like that: "You're right;" or, "You're wrong." But the people who are always keeping their minds open so that their brains fall out, and they don't know what's what, are the people who are going to be the least productive (you're going to find) in heaven of spiritual good, and thus of divine rewards.

Paul says, "From now on, Christians, we're not going to be like a bunch of kids." That's how children are. You can always con a child. I don't care what you tell this child. You can tell this child that something is so, and then you turn around, and somebody else can come along and cast a great doubt in his mind, and you've got him so that he does know whether it's so or not so. All you have to do is keep a straight face and be real serious when you tell him that the black hairs off of a white cat are magic. Just look straight, and he'll believe you.

Paul says, "Just get over that kid stuff." We should be long past that kind of childishness. Every time somebody comes and blows a new doctrine into our ear, we'll wave like a weak blade of grass? We bend with the thing. And then we come up, and we've get these tricky type of preachers and teachers who come up with their sleight-of-hand tricks of new doctrinal insights, and we're carried away. And they're standing around waiting to deceive us. All over town the cults are working on believers to deceive them. And as always, most of the people who belong to the cults are people who were once in evangelical churches. But because they were weak in doctrine, the cultist was able to blow them over.

I remind you that if you run your eyes back up to Ephesians 4:11-12, it will explain to you how it is that a Christian does not become a weak blade of grass to be bowled over by everybody who comes along with a new religious idea. We get back to the pastor-teacher who does the work of equipping the saints for the combat of ministry, and for the building-up of the body of Christ. And if the pastor-teacher fails, then the Christian is a weak blade of grass. He cannot, and will not, look at a person who gives them a doctrinal declaration, and say, "You're right;" or, "You're wrong."

However, this was not the case with Abraham. We are told that: "Abraham did not stagger at the promise of God." Abraham was at ease in his soul, and he was enjoying life, even though human viewpoint told him that, as the years passed, and the hopelessness of having an heir increased, he should have become more aggravated and more upset. Instead, the longer Abraham lived, the more at ease he was in faith rest. He didn't eat his heart out, wondering if he was doing the right thing. He didn't stand around wondering whether he was just kidding himself in his expectations.

The word "diakrino" is in the aorist tense, which again looks at the whole mental attitude of Abraham's life. It's passive. He was not caused to waver because of his circumstances. It is indicative – a statement of fact. There was complete certainty.

Here again, I have to explain something to you from the Greek Bible. Verse 20 in the Greek Bible does not begin with the words that we have in the English Bible. "He did not stagger" is not at the beginning of the Greek sentence. As you know, what comes first in a Greek sentence is where God the Holy Spirit's fingers are pointing, and He is saying, "That's what's important. That's the emphasis."

The Greek Bible begins with the words: "At the promise of God, he did not stagger through unbelief." The reason that's important is because that tells us where Abraham's eyes were. Abraham was not looking at his physical problems: his physical deadness toward procreation. But Abraham's eyes were on the Word of God. Abraham's eyes were on doctrine. Abraham's eyes were on the promise that God had made. Consequently, when his eyes were on what God had said, he was not tossed to and fro by the circumstances of his life. He was not struck down with unbelief.

So, the Holy Spirit lays emphasis by putting these words at the beginning of the sentence. Any doubt here would have constituted the fluctuation of unbelief. So, the Greek says: "With respect to the promise of God, he did not stagger." The “promise" is the word "epaggelia," which means "an undertaking to do something." Of course, this refers to the Abrahamic Covenant, first proclaimed in Genesis 12:1-3. It is the promise of God which God made to him. And because his eyes were on the Word of God, and not on his circumstances, he did not fall into "apistia," which is the word for "unbelief." This is in the case that means "by means of." He did not fall by means of unbelief.

So, we will translate it: "But with respect to the promise of God the Father." That is because, incidentally, it is "*the* God" here in the Greek: "*the* God:" "But with respect to the promise of God the Father, he did not waver by means of unbelief." Abraham's faith was not weak because he never doubted God's promise. That's what he was looking at. Abraham was operating from doctrine in his soul, but at the same time, he was realistically facing his circumstances sexually in which he found himself. He was not subject to being swayed by somebody's hotshot viewpoint (from somebody's old sin nature) to help carry him through.

**Christian Counseling**

Sometimes we want to help Christians, and counselors often fail monumentally, because they try to help people on some other basis than the Word of God. That's the only place that you can direct people. That's why counseling is usually such a farce. It's just a fraud. It's somebody coming along, and listening to your problems, and then trying to give you one little verse of Scripture when usually what your problem is, is the result of ignorance of doctrine. What they have to give you is not a verse of Scripture, but they have to give you a fistful of tapes which have explained a particular doctrine, so that you can get your head and your thinking straight, and then your problem will be resolved. And this thing that goes on under the guise of Christian counseling is just another one of those frauds that preachers play on people in order to make themselves seem important in the lives of those people.

If a church service is not a counseling service by means of teaching the Word of God, then it has failed of its divine mission. That's what a church service is. Every time you walk into a church service, it should be a time for counseling: but counseling by whom? By God – not by counseling by some human being who is sharing with you his experiences, and providing some empathy with your emotions, and entering into your problem. That will never help you.

Abraham, first and foremost, believed doctrine. And the inevitable results was faith rest relaxation. And the nice thing about this was that Abraham, therefore, could dogmatically move ahead with doctrine, and ignore the human viewpoint of people all around him. People around him (and Sarah was probably at the head of the list) were demanding of him: "Why is it that you're doing this? I just don't understand you, Abraham. I just don't understand the way that you're carrying on and the way you're acting. I don't understand you. Why are you doing this? Look: the years are going by, and we're building our lives around something. What is it that we're building our lives around? What is it that we're doing?" There are people all around him that were challenging him: "What's it all about?"

However, Abraham put his head up straight; stood at attention; sat up tall in the saddle; and, just kept moving along dogmatically with doctrine. He knew where he was going. "He knew whom he had believed." And just because there were people all around him that were far back down the trail, it didn't keep him from moving ahead. That's the negative description. He did not stagger at the promise of God through unbelief."

However, the positive description is: "But." That is the Greek word "alla" – the negative, which connotes here: "On the other hand." This introduces the positive description of Abraham's faith, explaining that statement at the beginning of verse 19: "And being not weak in faith," Here's the positive way in which he was not weak in faith. He was strong, and the word is "endunamoo." "Endunamoo" means "to strengthen." Here again, it is aorist tense: looking at Abraham's faith as a whole. It is passive. This was done to Abraham's faith. It is indicative – a statement of fact. Translating it – "having been strengthened in faith." Again, it is that famous word for faith (("pistis"). This is the same word we had before – his trust in God.

**Opinion**

Here it is *the* faith, the specific faith that he exercised back in Ur of the Chaldees: "with respect to his faith." Abraham was strong with respect to his faith, giving ..." This is the Greek word "didomi." "Didomi" is aorist again – Abraham's response as a whole. Aorist is a point idea. It takes it all together. It's active. Abraham chose to give this. And it is a participle – a principle stated. Now, if is aorist, and it is a participle, again we have a time factor indicated to us about "didomi." He gave in a certain order. The main verb is he "did not stagger." That's at the start of verse 20. But before he did not stagger, he had to do something, and that is that he was giving something. That is why he did not stagger. What did he give? "Having given glory." What he gave was "doxa." Interestingly enough, this word means "opinion." The translation of glory in Greek is "opinion."

Consequently, we get certain English words from that, like "paradox." You can see the "doxa" part in "paradox." What does paradox mean? Well, paradox means "contrary to opinion." Or you get the word "orthodox," and again you have the "doxa" part (the "dox"). What does orthodox mean? It means "a straight opinion." Or we have the word "heterodox." What does heterodox mean? It means other opinions.

So, here the word for glory in the Greek actually means an opinion. And what the Greek is telling us is that Abraham express an opinion toward God. His glorifying God is expressing an opinion about God. And Abraham's opinion about God was entirely good. The opinion that he was presenting was an opinion that indicated praise of God, and indicated honor of God. And that's what the word "doxa" connotes here. It connotes a good opinion that Abraham was doing was expressing a terrifically good opinion about God. He was giving forth a good opinion about God. And in the process of doing that, he was recognizing that God is indeed almighty. He can do what He promised. Furthermore, He is faithful, and that therefore he will do what He promised. He gave his glory specifically to "*the* God ('theos')". This is indicating specifically God the Father, who was using the Son as the agent.

"Glory to God" meant faith in God's word. Glorifying God is also an expression of gratitude. And the result of glorifying God is that a person is made strong in faith. Now get that connection. Because "giving" is aorist participle, "giving" tells us that it came before his not staggering. The reason he didn't stagger at the promise of God was because he was giving glory to God. He was being be grateful to God. The reason he was strong in faith was because he was grateful to God. He was giving glory to God.

So, the hopeless situation that he found himself in became a reason for praising God, because Abraham looked at his physical condition (and the condition of his wife), and he said, "You know, it is really going to be something terrific that we are going to have a son who is going to be the heir that will make us the leading nation of the world. We are going to have a son who will be in the line of the Messiah, and who will be the Savior of the world.

Now that is something really to praise God for: "Look at us – a couple of old crows. And God is going to make us the source of eternal life to all nations of the world. And we are going to become whole nations of people, and we are going to become the people through whom the kingdom of God will be brought upon the earth. Now that was something to look forward to.

This man had no doubt whatsoever in his mind that God was going to be able to do it, and his opinion of God was nothing but good.

Dr. John E. Danish, 1977

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