

# Romans 18 – Abraham or Nimrod: Faith or Works

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Romans 4:1-12

## Prologue: Noah Found Grace

- Noah's name {Rest} demonstrates Christ's salvation  
(Mt 11:28)
- Noah and sons believed God, built an ark and survived the Cataclysm that remade the world (He 11:7, 1Pe 3:18-20)
- God's command to Noah: Multiply and fill the earth (Ge 9:1, 7)
- After Noah's drunkenness he prophesized about his sons from which Nimrod rebelled; but Abram believed (Ge 9:26-27)

## Nimrod – Rebellious Man

- Noah prophesized Canaan, son of Ham, would be slaves to Japheth and Shem
- Nimrod rebelled against this forcing Japheth's and Shem's descendants to bow to him as ruler-god
- Babel was his palace complex to control cities



## Multiply and Spread Out

- Nimrod disobeyed God's command to fill the earth (Ge 9:1)
  - As chief profaner and mightiest of men he revived Cain's worship-government system centered on him\*
  - Ziggurat was for his ascension (Ascending Sacrifice) over everyone placing himself between people and God
  - God installed different languages onto Japheth's and Shem's people forcing compliance with commandment\*

## Abraham Was Compliant

- Abraham obeyed God's commandment to go forth to eventually possess Canaan; fulfill Noah's prophecy
- Nimrod produced only earthly descendants; but Abraham produced earthly and heavenly descendants
- God of Shem *bleses* Abraham's heavenly seed; i.e., believing Jews and Gentiles (Japheth and Ham)

## Comparison: Nimrod-Abraham

### Satan's Seed - Nimrod

- Born to slavery
- Proud, boastful over men
- Worship of self as god
- Babel: Monument to self
- Result: Confusion of sin

### Christ's Seed - Abraham

- Freed from slavery
- Humble, Lot choose way
- Worship of God over self
- Canaan: Gift from God
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## Two Lineages of Abraham (Jo 8:19-59; Ga 4:21-31)

### Earthly Seed - Slavery

- Unbelieving Jews
- True Father: Devil
- Lived by Works
- Judged by works
- No eternal rest

### Heavenly Seed - Freed

- Believing Jews-Gentiles
- True Father: God
- Lived by Faith of/in God
- Self-judged: Repentance
- Eternal rest in Christ

## When Did Abraham Receive Faith?

- Herein is how Paul proposed God answered the question for eternal
  - If Abraham *earned* salvation, commendation from God for keeping the Moral Law, then he did not need Christ; this was the Judaizers position: then and now
  - Abraham *received* salvation when he believed God would give him descendants as the galaxies; i.e., *saw* Christ's day (Time of His visitation) (Ge 15:5-6; Lk 19:41-44; Jo 8:56-58)

## Contradiction of Law Defense

- Paul saw earning salvation from God by *keeping* the civil/ceremonial Law as wages due; not as grace
- Judaizers ignored Moral Law, focusing on law issues which would result anyway from keeping Moral Law (Mt 23:23-28)
  - They conflated ceremonial aspects of the Law, to ignore the Moral Law; being born in sin meant Moral Law already condemned them: Present at conception (Ps 51:5, 16-17)

## Acknowledgement of Sin

- Belief, faith and trust, in God begins with recognition and self-judgment that one's sin violated God's righteousness (Ro 10:8-13; 2Co 7:10)
  - Overawed when confronted with the majesty of God which He would share with Abraham via Christ, Abraham repented, believed, was saved (Ge 3:15-16)
  - Judaizers followed path of Nimrod: proud, cruel, slaves; contemptuous of sinners who *appeared* beneath them

## Not a New Concept

- Paul quotes David proving he is not teaching a new, man-made concept but an ancient teaching of the Bible (Ps 32:1-2)
  - David sings of those whose sins God covered and forgave (Violations of Moral Law)
  - Blessed is the person whose works God does not count against him, her (Ro 20:11-15)
  - They will not see *second death*: eternal separation of God

## Another Judaizer Contradiction

- Paul highlights another contradiction in the Judaizers' argument against Gentile conversion apart from Law. Was Abraham justified by Law (Judaizer)?
  - Problem: Ceremonial/Civil Law and enumerated Moral Law would not exist until 430 years **after** Abraham
  - Therefore: Judaizers' laws had no hold over Abraham nullifying Judaizer's arguments
  - Christ was correct: Abraham was not their father (Je 9:44)

## Conclusion Judaizers Missed

- If Abraham lived 430 before any of the Laws then this also meant that Abraham was not a Jew for they did not exist until they accepted and agreed to live under Christ's theocracy (Ex 24:1-11)
  - Abraham was a non-Jew
  - Sign of God's Covenant with Abraham and his earthly people, circumcision, was not given until later (Ge 17:10-14)

## Summarizing Judaizer's Logic

- They believed Abraham was their father according to circumcision, Jewishness and the Laws
  - Since Abraham was declared righteous by God they also must be righteous for keeping the Laws and their piety
  - These were the criteria by which they judged others, including Christ, as unworthy of God
  - Since Bible did not support their argument, they developed their traditions: Talmud, Midrash, Mishnah

## Basis of Christ's Condemnation

- Christ used this same logic against them in His "Woe" speech against Sadducees, Pharisees, and Scribes (Mt 23:13-36)
- Paul, taught by the risen Lord, would also use the same logic since it left the Judaizers with no legitimacy
  - Unmasked, their hypocrisy was exposed for all to recognize, including themselves should they wish to repent

## Epilogue: Nimrod–Abraham

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## Epilogue: Lineage of Abraham

### Earthly Seed - Slavery

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(Jo 8:39-59, Ga 4:21-31)

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- Lived by Faith of/in God
- Self-judged: Repentance
- Eternal rest in Christ

## Epilogue: Lethal Contradictions

- Lethal Contradictions negating Judaizers justification of self-made righteousness by works of Law
  - Abraham righteous because he kept the laws
  - Abraham justified because he was circumcised
  - Abraham faithful because he was a Jew
- Abraham was none of those when God declared Him righteous by faith alone

## Ugly Face of Cultural Nomism

- Judaizers could not use the Scriptures to justify their beliefs (Mt 7:1-9)
  - Developed body of oral tradition which they *predated* back to when Moses received written Torah at Horeb
  - This legitimized, in their eyes, the weight of traditions
  - They elevated their traditions over Scriptures saying God gave the 70 elders His oral word, which was better

## Cultural Nomism Today

- Traditions, oral and written, exist today in Christendom with the same goals: justification of works apart from repentance and faith (Is 4:1-4)
  - Liturgical religions determine *salvation* by keeping of church dogmas
  - Evangelical religions determine *salvation* by keeping vain philosophies and scientisms of the world
  - Pietism uses government, forcing a false morality

## Do You Live by Faith

- Paul began his discussion with, "Just shall live by faith" because Abraham lived by faith (Ro 1:16-17)
  - Habakkuk penned this realization when God challenged his pietistic unbelief (Hab 2:1-4)
- This is the sin of every born from above believer
  - This chaotic, illogical and sinful worldview God seeks to remove via trials and tribulations: True Saving Faith