

SALVATION IN OLD TESTAMENT

People often ask, "How were people saved in the Old Testament?" In addressing an attack upon the gospel of grace salvation, Paul answered this very question in our lesson text.

As we read our lesson text, note the following four homiletical points. Note also how Paul taught God's answer to this question?

Gal.3:6	Salvation of Abraham	Believe	(pisteuo/ a.a.ind.3ps)
Gal.3:7	Sons of Abraham	Faith	(ek+ablative of source pistis)
Gal.3:8	Scriptural gospel to Abraham	Faith	(ek+genitive of means pistis)
Gal.3:9	Spiritual blessings of Abraham	Faith	(ek+ablative of source pistis)

(Gal.3:8, 16) "And the **Scripture, foreseeing that God would justify the Gentiles (ta ethnos) by faith, preached the gospel beforehand to Abraham, saying, 'all the nations (ta ethnos) shall be blessed in You.'**"

(Eph.2:8-9) "For **by grace you have been saved through faith; and that not of yourselves, it is the gift of God; not as a result of works, so that no one may boast.**"

This lesson will study four aspects of how people were saved in Old Testament by using Abraham's faith as an example.

1. The Judaizers out of the Christian church in Jerusalem were teaching that Gentiles had to be circumcised in addition to believing the gospel of Jesus Christ in order to be saved.

(Acts 15:1) "Some men came down from Judea and began teaching the brethren, 'Unless you are circumcised according to the custom of Moses, you cannot be saved.'" [Judaizers]

They had been spreading this false doctrine within Paul's church at Antioch of Syria. As a result, church conference was held in the Church of Jerusalem to settle this issue in Acts 15. After much debate, this doctrinal statement was issued, "**But we believe that we (Jews) are saved through the grace of the Lord Jesus, in the same way as they (Gentiles) also are.**" (Acts 15:11)

After this church conference, Judaizers continued spreading this false doctrine by attacking Paul message of grace part from works of Law. This led to the writing of the Book of Galatians.

"Nevertheless knowing that a man is **not justified by the works of the Law** but through faith in Christ Jesus, so that we may be justified by faith in Christ and **not by the works of the Law**; since by the works of the **Law no flesh will be justified.**" (Gal.2:16)

2. Paul used the father of the Jews, Abraham, who was saved as a Gentile by grace through faith apart from works of Law. Notice that Paul used Abraham and faith in each verse of Gal.3:6-9.

John the Baptist (JB) to the Pharisees: "Therefore bear fruit in keeping with repentance, and **do not begin to say to yourselves, 'We have Abraham for our father,'** for I say to you that from these stones God is able to raise up children to Abraham." (Luke 3:8; Acts 15:5)

Jesus Christ to the same: “And Jesus said to him, ‘Today salvation has come to this house, because he, too, is a son of Abraham. For the Son of man has come **to seek and to save** that which is lost.’” (Luke 19:9-10)

Paul to the Church Age Believer (CAB): “If you belong to Christ, then you are Abraham’s descendants, heirs according to promise.” (Gal.3:29) “Therefore, be sure that it is those who are of faith who are sons of Abraham.” (Gal.3:7)

(John 8:56) “Your father Abraham rejoiced to see My day and he saw it and was glad.”

- 3. Paul explains that Abraham was saved as a Gentile by grace through faith in the gospel of Christ before circumcision and 430 years before the Law (Gal.3:17; 1 Cor.15:3-4).**

Note three rhetorical questions and the answer:

“Is the blessing then on the circumcised or on the uncircumcised also? For we say, **‘Faith was credited to Abraham as righteousness.’** How then was it credited? While he was circumcised, or uncircumcised? Not while circumcised, but while uncircumcised; And he received the sign of circumcision, a seal of righteousness of the faith **which he had while uncircumcised,** so that he might be the father of all who believe without being circumcision, that righteousness might be credited to them.” (Rom.4:9-11; Gal.3:14, 26-29)

Abraham was saved at the age of 75 in Mesopotamia (Gen.12:1-4) and lived another 100 years in plan of God (Gen.25:7-8).

- 4. Paul warned the grace Church of the danger of a false gospel message and false mechanic of salvation.**

Deserting, different and distorting: “I am amazed that you are so quickly deserting Him who called you by the grace of Christ, for a different gospel; **which is really not another;** only there are some who are disturbing you and want to distort the gospel of Christ.” (Gal.3:6-7)

Paul said their **gospel message was correct** by the phrase, “Which is really not another.” (1 Cor.15:3-4)

But their **mechanic of salvation was incorrect.** The Judaizers were teaching that Gentiles had to believe the gospel and be circumcised (works of Law) in order to be saved (Acts 15:1, 5).

(Rom.1:16) “I am not ashamed of the gospel, for it is the power of God for salvation to everyone who believes, to the Jew first and also to the Greek.”

(Gal.2:21) “**I do not nullify the grace of God, for if righteousness comes through the Law, then Christ died needlessly.”**