

- (Romans 4:1–5 ESV) What then shall we say was gained by Abraham, our forefather according to the flesh? For if Abraham was justified by works, he has something to boast about, but not before God. For what does the Scripture say? “Abraham believed God, and it was counted to him as righteousness.” Now to the one who works, his wages are not counted as a gift but as his due. And to the one who does not work but believes in him who justifies the ungodly, his faith is counted as righteousness.



## Abraham ... Friend of God ...

- (Genesis 22:1–14 NLT) Some time later, God tested Abraham’s faith. “Abraham!” God called. “Yes,” he replied. “Here I am.” “Take your son, your only son—yes, Isaac, whom you love so much—and go to the land of Moriah. Go and sacrifice him as a burnt offering on one of the mountains, which I will show you.”
- The next morning Abraham got up early. He saddled his donkey and took two of his servants with him, along with his son, Isaac. Then he chopped wood for a fire for a burnt offering and set out for the place God had told him about. On the third day of their journey, Abraham looked up and saw the place in the distance. “Stay here with the donkey,” Abraham told the servants. “The boy and I will travel a little farther. We will worship there, and then we will come right back.” So Abraham placed the wood for the burnt offering on Isaac’s shoulders, while he himself carried the fire and the knife.
- As the two of them walked on together, Isaac turned to Abraham and said, “Father?” “Yes, my son?” Abraham replied. “We have the fire and the wood,” the boy said, “but where is the sheep for the burnt offering?” “God will provide a sheep for the burnt offering, my son,” Abraham answered. And they both walked on together. When they arrived at the place where God had told him to go, Abraham built an altar and arranged the wood on it. Then he tied his son, Isaac, and laid him on the altar on top of the wood. And Abraham picked up the knife to kill his son as a sacrifice. At that moment the angel of the Lord called to him from heaven, “Abraham! Abraham!” “Yes,” Abraham replied. “Here I am!” “Don’t lay a hand on the boy!” the angel said. “Do not hurt him in any way, for now I know that you truly fear God. You have not withheld from me even your son, your only son.”
- Then Abraham looked up and saw a ram caught by its horns in a thicket. So he took the ram and sacrificed it as a burnt offering in place of his son. Abraham named the place Yahweh-Yireh (which means “the Lord will provide”). **To this day, people still use that name as a proverb: “On the mountain of the Lord it will be provided.”**

## Rahab ... Prostitute ... Woman of faith ... Woman of God ...

- (Joshua 2:1–11 NLT) Then Joshua secretly sent out two spies from the Israelite camp at Acacia Grove. He instructed them, “Scout out the land on the other side of the Jordan River, especially around Jericho.” So the two men set out and came to the house of a prostitute named Rahab and stayed there that night. 2 But someone told the king of Jericho, “Some Israelites have come here tonight to spy out the land.” 3 So the king of Jericho sent orders to Rahab: “Bring out the men who have come into your house, for they have come here to spy out the whole land.” 4 Rahab had hidden the two men, but she replied, “Yes, the men were here earlier, but I didn’t know where they were from. 5 They left the town at dusk, as the gates were about to close. I don’t know where they went. If you hurry, you can probably catch up with them.” 6 (Actually, she had taken them up to the roof and hidden them beneath bundles of flax she had laid out.) 7 So the king’s men went looking for the spies along the road leading to the shallow crossings of the Jordan River. And as soon as the king’s men had left, the gate of Jericho was shut. 8 Before the spies went to sleep that night, Rahab went up on the roof to talk with them. 9 “I know the LORD has given you this land,” she told them. “We are all afraid of you. Everyone in the land is living in terror. 10 For we have heard how the LORD made a dry path for you through the Red Sea when you left Egypt. And we know what you did to Sihon and Og, the two Amorite kings east of the Jordan River, whose people you completely destroyed. 11 No wonder our hearts have melted in fear! No one has the courage to fight after hearing such things. For the LORD your God is the supreme God of the heavens above and the earth below.

- **What had this “woman of the world” picked up on as she risked her life to save the lives of Joshua’s spies? We have hints from her words, don’t we?**
- **We hear her fear—**“I know the LORD has given you this land.” “We are all afraid of you. Everyone is living in terror.” “We know what you did.” “No wonder our hearts have melted.”
- **But we hear more than fear. We hear awe and worship—**“The LORD your God is the supreme God of the heavens above and the earth below.”
- **And we hear faith—**“Now swear to me by the LORD that you will be kind to me and my family since I have helped you. Give me some guarantee that when Jericho is conquered, you will let me live, along with my father and mother, my brothers and sisters, and all their families” (Joshua 2:12-13).

