

January 18 Answers

- 1) Abram was justified by **faith**. God took him outside his tent one night and told him that his descendants would be as numerous as the **stars** of heaven. Abram believed God, and God “counted it to him as **righteousness**” (Gen 15:6). Abraham is **the example** of how we are saved by grace through faith (Rom 4:1–3; John 8:38–40). Paul later told the Galatians that God’s primary purpose in setting apart the Jews was to create a **spiritual** lineage, not a physical one. Being a “child of Abraham” means responding to God in **faith** and **obedience** like Abraham (cf. Gal 3:6–9). Years went by and Abram still had no child. Eventually, he listened to the advice of his wife Sarai and had a child through her Egyptian slave **Hagar**. Yet Ishmael was not the child of the **promise**, and Paul later used this story to demonstrate that not every descendant of Abraham is a true “child of Abraham.” Only those who **believe** like Abraham can claim such a privilege (cf. Rom 9:6–9). Paul also pointed out that Abraham was justified **before** he received the sign of circumcision (Rom 4:10). God did this deliberately in order to make him the father of **all** who believe without being circumcised, so that righteousness would be counted to them as well (Rom 4:11–12).