

Abraham, Sabbath, and God's Priorities

Commentary for January 1, 2010 — Two Articles for January

There are two articles this month. Read the "[January 2010 Newsletter](#)" that introduces both articles: "Did Abraham Observe the Sabbath?" and "The Priorities of God." (Read the Abraham article first because it relates to the second article.)

Abraham, "**the father of all them who believe**" (Romans 4:11), is the example for all believers. He does not represent us to God in any way, but Abraham "**is the father of us all,**" as the apostle Paul states:

"Because the law works wrath: for where no law is, there is no transgression. Therefore it is of faith, that it might be by grace; to the end the promise might be sure to all the seed; not to that only which is of the law, but to that also which is of the faith of Abraham; who is the father of us all."

• *Romans 4:15–16*

Abraham kept the laws that God gave him, and those laws were not the Ten Commandments or the Law of Moses. Abraham did not keep the Sabbath, as you will see evidenced in Dr. Martin's article. However, as the father of those who believe, the inheritance came through him to his spiritual descendants through faith, from a gift from Christ and God the Father as an act of grace to us all.

Abraham's promise and obedience did not come through works of law, but through faith. Eventually the entire human race will receive the same gift of faith, the same gift of grace, that Abraham received, and that each of you who believe in Christ's resurrection have received.¹

Inheritance

One of the important subjects of the article "The Priorities of God" is the discussion of inheritance, especially that of the firstborn who receives special benefits in most all traditional ancient societies. Inheritance is very important in Scripture.

"Has in these last days spoken unto us by his Son, whom he [God] has appointed heir of all things, by whom also he made the worlds."

• *Hebrews 1:2 KJV*

The Concordant Version translates this verse much better:

"... in the last of these days speaks to us in a Son, Whom He appoints enjoyer of the allotment of all, through Whom He also makes the eons."

• *Hebrews 1:2 Concordant Version*

Inheritance is an allotment, sometimes determined literally by a lottery (literally a choosing of lots, Number 26:52–56), sometimes determined by the leader of the family, clan, or tribe (Genesis chapters 48 and 49). We, as believers are blessed so that "**they which are called might receive the promise of eternal [eonian] inheritance" (Hebrews 9:15). This has been determined for us through God and Christ:**

1. See Dr. Martin's presentations "[Proof of the Resurrection](#)" and "[By Grace Are Ye Saved](#)" that explain these important points.

"Wherefore you are no more a servant, but a son; and if a son, then an heir of God through Christ."

• Galatians 4:7 KJV

In his epistle to the Galatians, the apostle Paul makes the distinction between Abraham's wife and his maidservant. Paul makes the point that in every possible way that we are full heirs by virtue of being heirs along with Christ. Again, the Concordant Version makes this point clearer, expanding the context by citing verse 6:

"Now, seeing that you are sons, God delegates the spirit of His Son into our hearts, crying 'Abba! Father!' So that you are not longer a slave, but a son. Now if a son, an enjoyer also of an allotment from God, through Christ."

• Galatians 4:6–7 Concordant Version²

Future Speaking Engagements

I am scheduled to travel to Israel in late January. The purpose of the trip is to speak with interested individuals about technology that may be useful in locating deep chambers in limestone bedrock. I am also finalizing speaking engagements about the Tomb of David while in Israel. I will post further details on the "[Upcoming Events](#)" page as soon as I have further details as to time and place.

In addition, I have been invited to speak at a conference in Richmond, Virginia on the 4th and 5th of April, 2010. The conference does not have a formal title, but it is a gathering of people who believe in universal reconciliation. Therefore I will be in that part of the country at that time, God willing.

Year End Receipt

Let me give you one last reminder to request year end receipts for your contributions. Several of you have made your request already, and you will receive the receipts in a timely manner. Thank you all for your contributions over the past year, and over the several years. We are most grateful for everything you do for ASK.

One Last Word

Let me pass one last statement of hope to you all written by the apostle Peter:

"Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, Who, according to His vast mercy, regenerates us into a living expectation, through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from among the dead, for the enjoyment of an allotment incorruptible and undefiled and unfading, kept in the heavens for you, who are garrisoned by the power of God, through faith, for salvation ready to be revealed in the last era."

• 1 Peter 1:3–5, Concordant Version

That era is arriving soon for us all.

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2. The word "maidservant" actually is "slave" in the Greek of Galatians 4:7. Hagar was an Egyptian woman, perhaps given to Abraham by Pharaoh (Genesis 21:9 and 12:16), not just a hired servant. Hagar was Abraham's slave serving his wife Sarah, as part of Abraham's household. It was Sarah's decision for her to have relations with Abraham, any offspring to be reckoned as Sarah's (Genesis 30:3–9). Hagar bore a child (Ishmael) from Abraham. Later, Sarah sent Hagar and Ishmael away from Abraham, with God's approval, under God's protection.