

Lesson 9 4:13-25

We are heirs of Abraham by Faith – 13-17

Heirship does not proceed from adherence to the law. If that were actually the case, there would be no need to **believe** in Christ. Furthermore, by having a law, the wrath of God is to be poured out since we all have broken the law. Certainly, the keepers of the law distinguished themselves by having a high standard, but their faith was required for righteousness.

On the flip side, heirship does proceed from faith. This faith is coupled to the grace of God with the result being life. Because faith is the key, and not the law, the gospel is relevant and effective for all humanity, not just the Jews. The substance of our faith is the God of creation and life.

The Body of Abraham was affected by faith – 18-21

Abraham was confident, believing in confidence itself, that he would indeed become a father of many nations, physically. He had evaluated the aging bodies of both him and his wife. He was expecting God to bless with a child and yet he was almost one hundred years old. Add to that that Sarah had been barren her whole life and was now too old to get pregnant. Yet, he believed God was going to absolutely follow through with His promise about descendants, knowing that He was capable.

*** The dilemma ***

What happened with Hagar? Was this a lapse in Abraham's faith. Romans 4:20 is clear. "No unbelief made him waver concerning the promise of God, but he grew strong in his faith as he gave glory to God."

A careful study of Genesis may render a simple explanation. Before taking Hagar, Abraham was never told by God that Sarah was the means to the fulfillment of the prophecy. As a matter of fact, the context of Genesis 16:2 would seem to indicate that Sarah saw a logical fulfillment of God's covenant with Abraham through Hagar. It isn't until after Ishmael is born that

The example of Abraham who was saved by faith – 22-25

Abraham's faith was "counted to him as righteousness." The idea is clear. Because he trusted God as capable to keep His covenant, he was deemed as, and given righteousness. The interesting thing about this phrase is that it doesn't just apply to Abraham. His faith is typical of the faith of each of us who trust God. Our faith, like his, is rewarded with righteousness.

The difference between our faith and that of Abraham is that we have something specific in which we trust. When Abraham trusted God had, and would accomplish a plan, we know the plan. We trust in the God who was slain for our sins, and was raised from the dead, making way for our justification.