

God's Promise, fulfilled

Scripture (NKJV)

3 ²⁹And if you are Christ's, then you are Abraham's seed, and heirs according to the promise. **4** ¹ Now I say that the heir, as long as he is a child, does not differ at all from a slave, though he is master of all, ²but is under guardians and stewards until the time appointed by the father. ³Even so we, when we were children, were in bondage under the elements of the world. ⁴But when the fullness of the time had come, God sent forth His Son, born of a woman, born under the law, ⁵to redeem those who were under the law, that we might receive the adoption as sons. ⁶And because you are sons, God has sent forth the Spirit of His Son into your hearts, crying out, "Abba, Father!" ⁷Therefore you are no longer a slave but a son, and if a son, then an heir of God through Christ.

Lesson

A wonderful encompassment of the Gospel, this block of Scripture gathers the truth of who we are in Christ Jesus – our long journey revealed with the Promise of God to Abram, to later be under the tutor of the law, then on to our rescue and subsequent receipt of the Holy Spirit.

'And if you are Christ's, then you are Abraham's seed, and heirs according to the promise.' – Paul qualifies his readers before continuing, closing the conditions starting at v 26, which shows who belongs to the Lord Jesus. And if we meet the criteria, then we have been shown to be of Christ. And if we are of Christ, we must also be the people spoken to be Abraham's descendants and heirs of Salvation, Promised to him by God, a Promise he believed. (**Gen 15:5-6**) Paul also lays the foundation for his argument against Salvation through works of the Law instead of through faith, a damnable practice the Galatians threatened to embrace under false teachers, even after they had seen the saving Grace of the Lord Jesus. (**Gal 4:9**)

'Now I say that the heir, as long as he is a child, does not differ at all from a slave, though he is master of all' – A child is told of being an **'heir'**, fully promised to one day receive his father's estate, already recognized as **'master of all'** his father's estate in the future. Meanwhile, he **'is under guardians and stewards until the time appointed by the father.'** This is a time of preparation for when he receives what is already understood to be his. But until the time comes, he will be under the care, guidance, and protection of the figure of authority made responsible by his father. The **'steward'** has the responsibility to oversee the children and slaves of the household, supervising their activities and preparation. The child is the heir, but he still **'does not differ at all from a slave'**, not yet exercising the rights he is sure to inherit at **'the time appointed by the father'**.

'Even so we, when we were children, were in bondage under the elements of the world' – Paul moves to draw the parallel of our station in God's Order, as His children. Before we were freed, we were all **'in bondage'**, slaves to our sin and to the Law of Moses which exposed it. The Law is the **'steward'** responsible for our restraint and safe keeping, bringing every human being to either his Salvation or his Judgment. As His children, we were once in bondage **'under the elements of the world'**, the Law, which in light of the New Covenant is a simple yet true means to the end goal. The **'elements'**, the Law, are a lesser part of the larger whole. As elements in the physical world are the base contributors of things of a higher order, so too is the Law which is designed to deliver us to the final goal, our standing at the time of Judgment. And before the Father calls them forth into Salvation and their inheritance in Jesus, the children are under the **'steward'** of the Law.

But when the fullness of the time had come, God sent forth His Son, born of a woman, born under the law, ⁵to redeem those who were under the law, that we might receive the adoption as sons. This is the Promise fulfilled, the content of the Good News of the Gospel in one sentence! **'But when the fullness of the time had come'** – Beginning before Creation, first revealed at the Fall, the Father's Plan deliberately marches on with the goal of seeing Himself Glorified by the trophy of those He would Save. And at the perfect time, when all was in agreement within His perfect Order and Will, **'God sent forth His Son'** Who is the Promise the Jews and the Nations look to for Salvation.

Foreordained before the foundation of the world (**1Pet 1:20**), the Son of God Himself was made flesh (**Jn 1:14a**), taking on the very form and nature of His creation that we might be Redeemed. (**Phil 2:6-7**) He is the union of God and man, perfect and without sin (**1 Jn 3:5**), the second 'Adam' (**1 Cor 15:45**), the Firstborn among the believers (**Rom 8:29**). **'Born of a woman'** that He would be fully clothed in man, yet still God, satisfying the promise of the Man Who would crush the serpent's head (**Gen 3:15**). He is the Word, the Essence and Truth of God, becoming flesh and living among men that they might behold Him and be Saved (**Jn 1:14**). **'Born under the law'** that He would fulfill the Law, living in obedience to the Father without fault or blame. (**Phil 2:8**) His Grace over the Law shows us the chasm of our inability to meet God's Standard, our desperate situation before He calls each believer to see and embrace his inheritance as a son. While He came to relieve us of our enslavement to the Law, the truth and validity of the Law was not undermined, but reveals the far reaches of Grace. He has, in His sinless life and Resurrection, ended the bondage of the flesh to the Law

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through death, releasing the flesh from the old covenant (**Rom 7:1-4**), (**Rom 8:2**) 'to redeem those who were under the law'. He has 'created in Himself one new Man from the two', 'reconciling them both to God in one body through the cross thereby putting death to the (law)'. (Eph 2:15-16) He has created the union of a Body now Glorified, made complete in a Flesh free from the Law and with a Spirit at peace with God. The Jews and the rest of the world are all under the Law, unless Saved and living in the liberty given to us as heirs no longer under the 'steward' of the Law.

'And because you are sons, God has sent forth the Spirit of His Son into your hearts, crying out, "Abba, Father!"'

– At the time appointed by the Father, each believer, recognized as a child of God, received the Seal and Promise of Salvation by the receipt of the Holy Spirit (**2 Cor 1:22**). This Spirit released us from the fear of death and bondage to the Law, so now we are free and cry out as one whose voice was once restrained. Like one escaping drowning, we burst through the surface and draw a breath as if it were our first. The Spirit's arrival brings that same urgency at our Rebirth and throughout our walk with Jesus.

Cited Scripture

Genesis 15:5-6

Then He brought him outside and said, "Look now toward heaven, and count the stars if you are able to number them." And He said to him, "So shall your descendants be." And he believed in the LORD, and He accounted it to him for righteousness.

Galatians 4:9

But now after you have known God, or rather are known by God, how is it that you turn again to the weak and beggarly elements, to which you desire again to be in bondage?

1 Peter 1:20

He indeed was foreordained before the foundation of the world, but was manifest in these last times for you

John 1:14

And the Word became flesh and dwelt among us, and we beheld His glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth.

Philippians 2:6-7

who, being in the form of God, did not consider it robbery to be equal with God, but made Himself of no reputation, taking the form of a bondservant, and coming in the likeness of men.

1 John 3:5

And you know that He was manifested to take away our sins, and in Him there is no sin.

1 Corinthians 15:45

And so it is written, "The first man Adam became a living being." The last Adam became a life-giving spirit.

Romans 8:29

For whom He foreknew, He also predestined to be conformed to the image of His Son, that He might be the firstborn among many brethren.

Genesis 3:15

"And I will put enmity between you and the woman, and between your seed and her Seed; He shall bruise your head, and you shall bruise His heel."

Philippians 2:8

And being found in appearance as a man, He humbled Himself and became obedient to the point of death, even the death of the cross.

Romans 7:1-4

Or do you not know, brethren (for I speak to those who know the law), that the law has dominion over a man as long as he lives? For the woman who has a husband is bound by the law to her husband as long as he lives. But if the husband dies, she is released from the law of her husband. So then if, while her husband lives, she marries another man, she will be called an adulteress; but if her husband dies, she is free from that law, so that she is no adulteress, though she has married another man. Therefore, my brethren, you also have become dead to the law through the body of Christ, that you may be married to another-- to Him who was raised from the dead, that we should bear fruit to God.

Romans 8:2

For the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus has made me free from the law of sin and death.

2 Corinthians 1:21-22

Now He who establishes us with you in Christ and has anointed us is God, who also has sealed us and given us the Spirit in our hearts as a guarantee.