

LESSON 13
(1958, 1966)

AMBASSADOR COLLEGE
BIBLE CORRESPONDENCE COURSE

What Is the Christian's Inheritance?

About Our Cover ...

Globe-view of our planet earth set against a background of the starry heavens. The Bible reveals that spirit-begotten Christians are HEIRS with Abraham to receive "the promises." Those promises will soon be inherited when Christ returns to establish the Kingdom of God on earth. Included in the promises is eternal inheritance of the EARTH -- NOT HEAVEN! This lesson gives the Biblical PROOF!

AN OPEN LETTER FROM THE EDITOR

You were born into a world which has developed a certain type of civilization. The instant you were born you knew NOTHING! But your eyes opened, you looked about, and knowledge of what you saw began registering in your memory -- began putting knowledge into your mind. Your ears heard sounds, and thus additional knowledge entered through the sense of hearing. Very elementary at first, but gradually, each bit of new knowledge, entering your mind through your sense of taste, smell, feel, sight and hearing, was ADDED to what had previously been stored there.

Gradually you came to know, and take up with, the customs, ways, generally accepted ideas and beliefs of this world. You accepted them, took them for granted without question.

Some of them were good -- but many of them were BAD. But you took them for granted without realizing they were bad.

You were born with a NATURE. We call it human nature. Few people realize what it is. Human nature has a spiritual side, and a physical side. On its spiritual side, it is pure VANITY. Vanity loves and tends to exalt the SELF. It is SELF-centered. It is selfish and greedy. It is this way NATURALLY. On its physical side, there are the five senses, and the PULL of these senses to want to be satisfied. Exercise of these senses can produce sensations of pleasure. Some of these sensual pleasures are healthy, uplifting and GOOD. But many are injurious, harmful and BAD. Yet the bad ones cry out for gratification as much -- probably far more than the good. Thus human nature exerts an automatic, impulsive PULL toward selfishness, greed, vanity, jealousy, envy, hatred, and toward the lusts (WRONG desires) of the flesh.

Human nature makes it come NATURAL to resent and resist authority over one. A child tends to resist the authority of his parents. We grow up with a natural attitude of hostility toward any authority, all the way up to GOD.

Human nature wants to BE good. It just doesn't want to DO good because GOOD is the WAY of God's invisible, inexorable, spiritual LAW. That LAW is, simply, LOVE. It is love toward God in the form of trusting and willing OBEDIENCE to God's every command and direction, knowing it is for our highest good. It is love toward God in the form of being GOD-centered -- having the mind CONTINUALLY (consciously or sub-consciously) in contact with

God, RELYING on God, seeking guidance from God, worshipful in the sense of gratitude, obedience, faith in complete trust. It is love toward fellow MAN -- in the sense of outgoing concern, EQUAL TO love and concern for self.

Now NO MAN exercises THAT KIND of love NATURALLY. YOU simply were not born with that kind of love.

You DON'T HAVE IT!

That is, not unless you have received it from God through His GIFT of His Holy Spirit.

THAT LOVE travels a certain road. It is the road that leads to peace, to happiness, to confident assurance, security, well-being, ENJOYMENT without kickbacks, prosperity -- every good thing the heart desires.

Everyone wants that RESULT.

That is to say, everyone wants to BE good.

But no one, it seems, NATURALLY wants to GO that way -- to DO good.

That is the WAY of God's Law.

Now this world is NOT FULL of happiness, peace, joy, and universal prosperity. It is pretty well filled with strife -- in the home, in business, in politics, in war between nations. It is pretty well filled with unhappiness, frustration, insecurity. It is pretty well filled with crime and violence, with broken homes and unhappy quarreling homes, with sickness and disease, with frustrations, failures, tragedies.

Now GOD is NOT the author of all these troubles in the world.

God has, FOR A GREAT PURPOSE, made humans free moral agents, and allotted six thousand years for mankind to MAKE A CHOICE -- whether to accept God's government over him, to be ruled by God's Law of LOVE -- or whether to set up his own ideas of man-made government, following what comes NATURALLY -- HUMAN NATURE.

That six thousand years is about up. When it is -- in a VERY few more years, perhaps less than 10 -- God Almighty is going to intervene supernaturally and with divine POWER in the governments and ways of society -- and BRING PEACE AND HAPPINESS TO HUMANITY!

HOW can that be done?

It's simple!

There is A WAY of personal, group, and organized living that will automatically produce that utopia. And there is A WAY that HAS, for 6,000 years, produced curses, war, strife and violence, frustration, failure everything this world has.

God is simply going to enforce, with divine Power, HIS WAY. He is going to take over all governments, in a super WORLD GOVERNMENT, ruled by the very CREATOR. It will rule by GOD'S LAWS -- the WAY of love!

Why do some people -- even college professors and some who are intellectually inclined -- become Communists? Because they see many things WRONG in this world -- they want to BE right -- they grasp Communism as a last straw and only hope, under the delusion that THEY CAN HAVE A PART IN MAKING THIS A BETTER WORLD! They want to BE right -- but they don't want to DO right. So they grasp the straw that makes the lying and false PROMISES of producing the solution. But Communism is only another IDEA OF MAN BASED ON HUMAN NATURE. It is a theoretical WAY that would destroy what little good there might be in this world's society. It is the most false of false hopes.

But YOU can HAVE A PART in actually bringing PEACE, happiness, joy and abundance to humanity. God Almighty is GOING TO DO IT -- whether or not you have a part in it! But He is not

going to do it alone. He is going to take certain human beings, born in the very LIKENESS of God, who REPENT of their carnal human nature who cry out to God to CHANGE that nature, and GIVE them the matchless supreme GIFT of His divine LOVE that will travel THE WAY toward peace, happiness and joy.

These are they who, through real repentance of what they ARE as well as what they have done, through faith in the sacrifice of Jesus Christ as well as in His resurrected LIFE and POWER, are forgiven their guilty past, given contact with God, CHANGED, CONVERTED, receiving HIS HOLY SPIRIT, being begotten as HIS CHILDREN, receiving the DIVINE nature.

In other words, they REPENT of human nature -- they REPENT of hostility to authority -- of resentment against God's Law. They SURRENDER unconditionally to GOD, and wholeheartedly WANT Him to rule in their lives. They CHANGE (through God's power given by His grace) from rebellion to submission -- from SELF-centeredness to being GOD-centered. They let Jesus Christ (in Spirit) come into their lives and actually live their lives for them (Galatians 2:20).

They change from THE WAY that has brought all the curses upon this unhappy world, to THE WAY that will bring a brilliant, joyous UTOPIA to earth in a very few years when God sends the LIVING Jesus Christ in all Power and Glory to RULE ALL NATIONS and bring the happy, peaceful WORLD TOMORROW!

This CHANGE is conversion. This is what it means to BECOME a Christian. A Christian is NOT merely one who PROFESSES Christ. God's own instruction to us -- the Bible says that if one has not received God's Holy Spirit, he is NONE of His -- he is NOT a Christian (Romans 8:9). God gives His Holy Spirit ONLY to them that OBEY Him (Acts 5:32). This implants within the mind the DIVINE NATURE -- it means a CHANGED MIND!

But it does NOT remove the HUMAN nature. The MIND governs whether the converted Christian now FOLLOWS the pulls, the impulses, the desires of human nature, or whether he resists them and is LED BY the newly received divine nature. "As many as are LED BY the Spirit of God, they are the sons of God" (Romans 8:14). But one's HUMAN nature cries out to be satisfied -- does not like to be repressed.

Just RECEIVING God's Spirit is not enough. One must BE LED by God's Spirit. His Spirit opens the mind to UNDERSTANDING of spiritual truth, and the KNOWLEDGE of God's Law. It opens the mind to THE WAY one should follow. God's Spirit also is the love of God -- God's own divine love flooding into the human heart, and flowing on out in love to God and love to neighbor.

One must therefore GROW in spiritual knowledge and in God's grace (II Peter 3:18). He must become a DOER of God's Law -- actually LIVING in THE WAY of peace and happiness and joy. This means he must OVERCOME his own carnal nature, his old habits, the temptations of the world -- HE MUST BE CHANGED! He must develop toward perfect spiritual and righteous CHARACTER. The real Christian is undergoing a life of TRAINING to become a RULER in God's Kingdom -- in the happy and peaceful WORLD TOMORROW.

One cannot learn everything in a minute, a day, or a year. One does not become perfect at one jump. It is a continuous PROCESS. No Christian becomes perfect at the very beginning. He does not overcome or root out all the sins, the wrong habits, all at once. He must do it little by little. But, "he that overcometh, and keepeth MY WORKS unto the end," says Jesus Christ, "to him will I give power over THE NATIONS: AND HE SHALL RULE THEM" (Revelation 2:26-27).

WHY do THE NATIONS of this earth need to be ruled by Christ and those trained under a Christian life? Because all the unhappiness -- everything WRONG with this world -- has come from living THE WAY of human nature -- THE WAY of hostility to God's Law and GOD'S Government. Because the only way this world can have PEACE, PROSPERITY, HAPPINESS, is to be forced to build a society based on THE WAY that PRODUCES these desired blessings.

If you have started on THAT RIGHT WAY, don't get discouraged because you have slipped and fallen down along the road a few times. Get up and KEEP GOING. Even if you have sinned and are truly sorry, you can repent and Christ is your High Priest to forgive. Read and study I John 1:7-10 and 2:1-2. This is written to converted CHRISTIANS.

At the time of Christ's coming, the dead in Christ will be resurrected and rise to meet the descending Christ in the air. At that instant those LIVING who have been thus CHANGED, begotten by God's Spirit, will be changed in composition, from mortal to immortal -- from matter to spirit -- from human to divine.

THEY are then to RULE with and under the all-powerful living Christ, until ALL NATIONS beat their swords into plowshares, and PEACE shines forth on this war-weary earth!

Jesus Christ taught His followers to PRAY: "THY KINGDOM COME -- THY WILL BE DONE ON EARTH!" How about it? Shall we pray that prayer?

I DO!

IS HEAVEN PROMISED TO THE SAVED?

WHERE will the "saved" spend eternity? Do you REALLY know? Of course you've always HEARD that you'll go to heaven, if you are "saved" -- and you've probably just accepted it WITHOUT QUESTION.

But did you ever stop to PROVE it for yourself? Did you ever look into the BIBLE TO SEE whether it REALLY does say Christians will go to heaven?

It's time we learned what Almighty God -- the FINAL AUTHORITY -- reveals about the Christian's promised inheritance! Let's begin to UNDERSTAND the astounding truth from your Bible!

God Makes a Promise

There is a PROMISE in your Bible which tells WHAT the saved shall inherit for eternity -- and WHERE they will be! That promise was made to all Christians. Yet the promise of this place was not made DIRECTLY to Christians. It was made to ABRAHAM, from whom Christ -- as an HEIR of Abraham -- descended!

As soon as one becomes a Christian -- as soon as he is truly Christ's -- he becomes a co-heir WITH CHRIST of this promise (Rom. 8:17). Therefore, the promise which was made to Abraham and his heir, Christ, also applies to every Christian.

While addressing Gentile converts, God says through Paul, in Galatians 3:16,29, "Now to ABRAHAM and his SEED [Christ] were the promises made ... And if YE be Christ's, then are ye Abraham's seed [children] and HEIRS according to the PROMISE."

Do you COMPREHEND what that means? Let's understand! "If ye be Christ's" -- that is, if you are TRULY CHRISTIANS -- then you are ABRAHAM'S CHILDREN -- you are accounted by God spiritually as children of Abraham -- and are now "HEIRS according to the PROMISE" -- YOU are now an HEIR, a beneficiary -- you will receive the FULFILLMENT of the SAME PROMISE that God made to

Abraham!

Notice that the Christian is NOT YET a possessor of his inheritance -- he is NOW an HEIR -- and what he will inherit (possess) if saved, is the SAME INHERITANCE promised to Abraham. Whatever shall be the inheritance of the saved is a definite, SPECIFIC PROMISE of God which was made to the ISRAELITE forefather, Abraham.

Abraham is referred to in the Bible as the "FATHER" of the FAITHFUL (Rom. 4:11; Gal. 3:7, 9). Abraham is the father of all those who are FULL OF FAITH! If one is converted, whether he be Jew or Gentile -- regardless of race or color or sex -- if one is Christ's, then he becomes one of Abraham's children, and an HEIR of the PROMISE made to Abraham. The converted Christian is to INHERIT what was PROMISED to Abraham.

If you'll look into your Bible to find out what God promised to Abraham -- to find out WHAT is the inheritance of those who are saved -- to find out WHY we have to be Abraham's children to inherit this promise -- WHEN and HOW we shall inherit the promise -- YOU'RE IN FOR A SHOCKING SURPRISE!

There is no other question more IMPORTANT in your life -- this matter concerns YOUR ETERNITY -- and yet you probably never thought to really look into it for yourself -- IN YOUR OWN BIBLE!

The statement we read from the Book of Galatians actually sums up the WHOLE of the Gospel -- it is a condensed statement of the very PURPOSE and PLAN of God for mankind! Your hope of ETERNAL LIFE -- of salvation -- depends altogether on what is stated in that greatly misunderstood passage!

Christ Confirmed the PROMISE

In order to understand this important question, notice what is written in Romans 15:8: "Now I say that Jesus Christ was a minister of the circumcision for the truth of God, to CONFIRM the PROMISES made unto the fathers."

In bringing a NEW MESSAGE -- the GOSPEL -- Jesus came to confirm the promises made to the fathers.

But WHO were the FATHERS? -- and WHAT are the PROMISES made to them? -- heaven? -- purgatory?

Your salvation depends on the answer!

The inspired words of Peter relate that "The God of ABRAHAM, and of ISAAC, and of JACOB, the God of OUR FATHERS, hath glorified His Son Jesus" (Acts 3:13).

The fathers, then, were Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. If you are Christ's -- if you are a CHRISTIAN -- YOU are an heir to inherit -- not what men might devise in their imaginations -- you are an heir ACCORDING TO THE PROMISE!

 PHOTO CAPTION: Above, remains of the Babylonian temple at Eridu, in southern Iraq. Here early Babylonians used to worship Enki, pagan god of the deep. God called Abraham out of such religious confusion and idolatry. Right, ruins of ancient Babylon, capital city of King Nebuchadnezzar's vast empire. God likens it to the confused spiritual "Babylon" in which we live today.

If you're an heir, you are going to INHERIT something. If you're an heir according to the promise, you are going to INHERIT WHATEVER WAS PROMISED TO THE FATHERS -- not something else.

That promise to Abraham is IMPORTANT! Whatever it is -- THAT

IS what you shall inherit -- if you are saved! You find the account of that PROMISE MADE TO ABRAHAM in the Book of Genesis.

Abraham OBEYED

Now notice the 12th chapter of the Book of Genesis, verse 1: "Now the Eternal had said unto Abram, get thee out of thy country, and from thy kindred, and from thy father's house, unto a LAND that I will show thee."

We find that God called Abram -- as his name was originally -- out of the land of Babylon where he lived -- surely symbolic of the spiritual "Babylon" in which we live today -- just as, today, God calls you and me out of THIS world -- THIS BABYLON!

Abraham didn't quibble or argue. Verse 4 says: "So Abram DEPARTED." He went to a CERTAIN LAND, where God led him -- the land we call Palestine today! ABRAHAM OBEYED GOD. "So Abram departed!" it is written. That is why he was made FATHER of the precious promises on which your eternal salvation rests! He OBEYED -- immediately he DEPARTED! Yes, just as you and I too must OBEY, if we, WITH Abraham, are to inherit the promises!

Men today have NO CONCEPTION of what is in store for the one who is really SAVED. The inheritance that awaits you -- if you surrender to God -- if you OBEY as Abraham obeyed -- if you rely, not on YOUR faith, but on the very FAITH OF CHRIST -- and if you are BORN AGAIN -- that inheritance surpasses anything you have ever conceived of so FAR, that you haven't the slightest conception of your TRUE POTENTIAL DESTINY!

As we read in I Corinthians 2:9, "Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man, the things which God hath prepared for them that love Him ..." The inheritance which God has prepared for us cannot even be conceived of by the natural mind of man -- but God DOES reveal it to us "BY HIS SPIRIT!" (I Cor. 2:10.)

Now WHAT did God promise Abraham? We are about to see. But first, READ these instructions.

Before You Begin

This lesson is intended to direct you to the BIBLE -- to help you learn the truth of God's Word. Here is the method of study.

Is your Bible in front of you? If not, get your Bible -- or Bibles, if you have more than one translation -- BEFORE YOU DO ANOTHER THING! Have a good dictionary, a concordance if you own one, and your notepaper all placed in front of you on a desk or table.

Remember -- you must open your Bible to EVERY PASSAGE. Never say to yourself, "Oh, I think I know what this scripture is referring to" -- and then pass over it. You need to "KEEP YOUR NOSE IN THE BIBLE," so to speak. You must read and re-read and think out each passage. MEDITATE on this new knowledge in your leisure time during the following twenty-four hours, and in your time of prayer -- so you WON'T FORGET it!

Make God's Word a PART OF YOU! Don't forget, this is a BIBLE STUDY Course not just a study of these words we send you.

Here is the method of making effective notes: Write down neatly on your paper the title of this lesson. Underneath that write down the lesson number. As you come to each question section, write down its heading. Then, UNDERNEATH at the left-hand margin of your paper, number each question and write

down the scriptural answer to each, together with any pertinent ideas that come to your mind.

Be SURE to WRITE OUT the scripture which answers each question. If you have not done so before, BEGIN TO DO IT NOW! Writing down every word of each Bible passage, and any comments you wish to make as you go along, will help you greatly in REVIEWING and REMEMBERING.

This lesson, like all others, is extremely important to you. Have you PRAYED to God for understanding? If not, then go to a private place, kneel down, and ask God for SPIRITUAL UNDERSTANDING and wisdom. Ask Him to HELP YOU grasp and apply in your own life the knowledge this lesson will reveal to you in the Bible.

And now for the lesson itself!

LESSON 13 The "Promised Land"

1. Did God call Abraham out of the land in which he had been residing? Gen. 12:1. Did God, at this same time, PROMISE that He would lead Abraham to another land -- a PARTICULAR land? Same verse.

2. Does the Bible record that Abraham ARGUED with God about leaving the land, like most people do today, when they are called upon to give up the bad habits they have acquired in this world and follow where God leads them? Or did Abraham just Do AS GOD COMMANDED HIM? Gen. 12:4. What land did God lead Abraham into? Gen. 12:5.

COMMENT: Canaan is the present land of Palestine.

3. Now just what DID God promise ABRAHAM? Gen. 12:7.

COMMENT: "Seed" means "offspring." So the promise was the INHERITANCE of the LAND OF PALESTINE by Abraham's offspring.

4. Abraham then went down into the land of Egypt for a short time. When he returned to Palestine, what did God tell Abraham to do? Gen. 13:14-15. Did God reiterate His promise that He would give Abraham's seed this particular land? Did God also promise Abraham that he, too, would receive this land? Verse 15. And that Abraham's offspring would be multiplied? Verse 16.

COMMENT: PALESTINE was PROMISED by God to Abraham a second time for emphasis. Notice that Palestine was PROMISED. That is why it's called "the PROMISED LAND"!

5. For HOW LONG is it promised -- FOREVER? Gen. 13:15.

COMMENT: The inheritance is to be an ETERNAL inheritance, which of necessity involves and INCLUDES EVERLASTING LIFE!

6. If one inherits a piece of LAND, the deed must describe the exact BOUNDARIES of the property. What is the description of the land we may hope to inherit? Gen. 15:18.

COMMENT: We have all seen enough maps to know that the boundaries here described are NOT up in HEAVEN, but are the boundaries of a LAND RIGHT HERE ON EARTH -- and the promise THE PROMISE OF ETERNAL INHERITANCE -- is the LAND OF PALESTINE, from the Nile to the Euphrates River, HERE on this earth! God help us to put our TRUST in the sure Word of God, NOT in the FABLES OF MEN!

7. Was this promise EXPANDED until ultimately it included inheritance of the WHOLE EARTH? Rom. 4:13.

PHOTO CAPTION: The lush Jordan Valley in Palestine today -- part of the inheritance promised to Abraham's descendants.

 COMMENT: Other scriptures to be studied in this lesson show that the promise of ETERNAL INHERITANCE includes MUCH MORE!

Obedience Before Inheritance

In making this promise to Abraham, God conditioned it on OBEDIENCE. Abraham DID OBEY!

First, he LEFT his native land, his friends and relatives, his old ways of life -- he FORSOOK ALL and followed where God led. Did God stop here in testing Abraham, and CONFIRM this priceless promise? OR, did God test Abraham further before doing so? Let us examine.

1. How did God test Abraham? Gen. 22:1, 2.

COMMENT: The proper translation of the word "tempt," used here, is "try." God tempts no man to cause him to fall. When the King James Translation of the Bible was made, the word "tempt" meant "try," or to "TEST." Thus the translators used the word "tempt."

2. Did Abraham, unlike the first time, stop to reason it out, or make excuse, or rebel? Or did he dutifully OBEY God -- even rising early in the morning to do so? Gen. 22:3.

3. Did God thus take Abraham's only son? Gen. 22:10-12.

COMMENT: God did not take the son -- God merely wanted Abraham's WILLINGNESS TO OBEY, in and through faith. Because Abraham was FAITHFUL -- full of faith -- the Bible refers to Abraham as the symbolic "father" of ALL who are full of faith in this same sense.

4. But AFTER Abraham HAD obeyed -- HAD been put to the test and found faithful -- were there any OTHER CONDITIONS to the promise? Gen. 22:15-18. Underline heavily in your Bible the words, "BECAUSE thou hast DONE this thing," in verse 16, and the words, "BECAUSE thou hast OBEYED MY VOICE," in verse 18.

COMMENT: Now the PROMISE WAS UNCONDITIONAL. Abraham already HAD PERFORMED HIS PART of the COVENANT -- this agreement.

5. What other scripture shows us this promise is now ABSOLUTELY SURE? -- did Abraham faithfully obey God in EVERY WAY? Gen. 26:5.

COMMENT: It should be remembered that God's law -- God's commandments -- have been in effect from the very time of creation. "Sin is the transgression of the law" (I John 3:4). The same fundamental, eternal SPIRITUAL LAWS that Adam transgressed when he sinned are the SAME laws and commandments Abraham obeyed and kept -- long before the sacrifices and rituals of Moses were instituted.

6. Were these SAME promises passed on down to Isaac, Abraham's son? Gen. 26:1-4. Why? Verse 5. Were ALL nations to be blessed through Isaac, as they were through Abraham? Verse 4.

7. Were these SAME PROMISES then passed down to Jacob, Isaac's son? Gen. 35:9-12. Note verse 11, then read comment below.

COMMENT: The explanation of verse 11 is this: the UNITED STATES is the "nation" referred to here, and the BRITISH COMMONWEALTH is the "company of nations." If you have not yet done so, send for Mr. Armstrong's FREE book, "The United States and British Commonwealth in Prophecy". It fully explains this marvelous truth.

Jacob -- whose name was later changed to ISRAEL -- had twelve children. Each gave rise to one of the twelve tribes of

ISRAEL -- known collectively as the CHILDREN OF ISRAEL, or ISRAELITES. One of these tribes originated from the brother JUDAH -- known as the "Jews." All people of the earth who have not descended from Abraham, are called Gentiles by the Bible.

8. The promises were made, as we have seen, to Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, and Jacob's CHILDREN. Jacob's children are ISRAELITES, not Gentiles. There is a mistaken idea, today, that Christianity is a GENTILE religion. But through whom does CHRIST plainly say salvation is? John 4:22. And what does Paul say about this? Rom. 2:10.

COMMENT: The SCEPTRE promise, through which Christ and salvation were promised, went specifically to the house of Judah, whose people are called JEWS. The Bible reveals that the COVENANTS and the PROMISES pertained to all of ISRAEL. So we read in Romans 9:4: "Who are ISRAELITES; TO WHOM pertaineth the adoption and the glory, and the covenants, and the giving of the law, and the service of God, AND THE PROMISES.

Christians Are HEIRS to the Promises

Since these promises were made specifically to Abraham and his descendants mentioned above, how can ALL nations also be BLESSED through these promises? Let's understand.

1. Did God promise Abraham that ALL nations of the earth would be blessed through his one "seed"? Gen. 12:3 and 22:18. Who is this "seed"? Gal. 3:8, 16.

COMMENT: The word "seed" in Gen. 22:18 refers specifically to Abraham's ONE SEED, who is Christ -- not to Abraham's MULTIPLE "seed," or REMAINDER of his blood offspring (Gen. 13:16 and 17:8).

2. Doesn't Luke 3:23, 34 prove that Jesus was a BLOOD OFFSPRING -- a SEED -- of Abraham?

COMMENT: Joseph was actually the SON-IN-LAW of Heli (see margin of your Bible) who was the father of Mary. Jesus' bloodline was through His MOTHER Mary who descended from Abraham (verse 34).

3. HOW did Paul say that Gentiles could share in the promises made to Abraham? Gal. 3:28-29.

COMMENT: Unless a Gentile becomes a SPIRITUAL Israelite through Christ, he has ABSOLUTELY NO HOPE of becoming an HEIR to the SPIRITUAL promises made to Abraham! This is made possible only through becoming "Christ's" -- by becoming a SPIRIT-BEGOTTEN CHRISTIAN!

4. What did Paul say the CONVERTED Ephesian Gentiles used to be IN TIMES PAST? Eph. 2:11-12.

COMMENT: This doesn't sound like Christianity is a GENTILE religion. THIS doesn't sound like the NEW Covenant is a GENTILE covenant! WHILE these particular Ephesians Paul was here talking to were Gentiles in the FLESH, they had become SPIRITUAL Israelites THROUGH Christ. But they were "STRANGERS from the covenants of promise; having NO HOPE, AND WITHOUT GOD in the world," BEFORE conversion!

5. But NOW, through Christ, are they made near? Eph. 2:13. Are they strangers and foreigners any more? Verse 19. Are they fellow citizens with the saints, and of the SPIRITUAL Household of God? Same verse.

COMMENT: And so today, WHOSOEVER WILL from EVERY nation, may come and take of the waters of eternal life FREELY, because God has kept His promise, and the promised Seed, Christ, has come.

What a glorious, matchless privilege to be taken into the

very Household of God -- to be able to call the Eternal Creator our FATHER! For THROUGH CHRIST, Abraham becomes our fleshly father, and GOD becomes our spiritual Father. We read in Galatians 3:7: "Know ye therefore that they which are of FAITH, the same are the CHILDREN OF ABRAHAM." That's why Abraham is called the "father" of the faithful (Rom. 4:11) -- whether Jew or Gentile!

Again, in Romans 8:14-15: "For as many as are led by the Spirit of God, they are the SONS OF GOD ... Whereby we cry, Abba Father." Yes, now SPIRIT-BEGOTTEN sons who shall become BORN SONS at the time of the resurrection -- to become INHERITORS of the Kingdom of God!

The Kingdom of God is the FAMILY of God -- the GOD FAMILY! It's a glorious FAMILY RELATIONSHIP! This glorified INHERITANCE surpasses anything you have ever conceived of in your mind!

But what is the difference between inheriting the EARTH and the KINGDOM of God -- WHERE shall we inherit the Kingdom? Let's study further and see.

NO Man Has Ascended to Heaven -- Except Christ

We have clearly seen, from the Bible, that the EARTH IS THE INHERITANCE OF THE SAVED -- NOT heaven. But where does the Bible specifically SAY we DO NOT go to heaven?

1. Did Jesus dogmatically state that NO ONE, beside Himself, has ever ascended up to heaven? John 13:33.

COMMENT: The Bible plainly states that NO MAN has ever ASCENDED UP into the heaven where God is, EXCEPT Christ!

2. What else did Christ tell His disciples? John 3:13.

COMMENT: Even Christ's own disciples were told they could NOT go up into heaven where He was going. (Send for Mr. Armstrong's FREE booklet, "Where Are Enoch and Elijah?")

3. But DID Christ give them an idea of WHERE they would be and WHAT they would be doing WHEN He returns? John 14:2, 3. Read also Matt. 25:31, 34.

COMMENT: "Mansions" -- rooms -- in the "Father's house" -- God's Temple in the Old Testament times -- were occupied by God's priests. These ROOMS represented POSITIONS OF AUTHORITY.

WHEN Jesus will have returned to this earth, as King of kings, RULER of all nations on earth, THEN He will say to the saved: "Come, ye blessed ... INHERIT THE KINGDOM, prepared for you." The Kingdom of God is the divine, ruling FAMILY of God. It will rule all nations, here ON EARTH! The saints will HAVE POSITIONS OF AUTHORITY in that Kingdom. To enter into -- to INHERIT -- the divine Kingdom of God is a destiny of such marvelous GLORY that your mind cannot grasp it now! And our inheritance, as divine members of the very GOD FAMILY, shall be the earth for an EVERLASTING POSSESSION.

WHAT'S WRONG with the earth?

Absolutely nothing but SIN -- rebellion against GOD and His eternal SPIRITUAL LAWS that GOVERN peace and happiness and joy! Happiness and joy -- a GLORIFIED condition such as you MAY inherit -- is not a matter of geographical location! It is a spiritual condition! There will be NO SIN in that happy world tomorrow! No liars -- no murderers -- no thieves or robbers. Think of it -- there'll be NO SATAN to deceive people, no locks on doors -- no jails, no hospitals -- no poorhouses! No strife, no war -- no sickness or disease no poverty nor hunger, nor want!

Fulfillment of Promises Just AHEAD

Has Abraham already inherited the promises?

First, notice the inspired words of the first Christian martyr, Stephen, full of faith and the Holy Spirit -- Stephen who PAID WITH HIS LIFE for these inspired words of Scripture. They are in the Book of Acts.

1. Has Abraham yet RECEIVED the inheritance God promised to him? Acts 7:2-5. Note especially verse 5.

COMMENT: Abraham NEVER RECEIVED the promised inheritance -- though God's promise was made UNCONDITIONAL because Abraham HAD OBEYED God!

2. Was Abraham merely a SOJOURNER, during his lifetime, in the land that God had promised to him? Heb. 11:8-10. Note verse 9 particularly. Even as he lay dying, had he, as yet, RECEIVED the promises? Verse 13. But does verse 8 point out that Abraham will, IN THE FUTURE, receive the fulfillment of these promises? Note the words "AFTER receive"!

3. Does the Bible say that Isaac and Jacob were heirs to this SAME promise? Heb. 11:9. Have they received it, as yet? Verse 13.

COMMENT: Do you grasp what these inspired Scriptures of God say? They say in plain language that all these died, NOT having received their inheritance -- the very FATHERS to whom the promises were made did NOT "go to their 'reward' at death!" THUS SAYS THE LORD!

4. Was Abraham STILL DEAD during the time of the apostles? John 8:52, 53. Then Abraham has NOT received the promises TO THIS DAY, has he?

COMMENT: All through the New Testament you read that Christians who become Abraham's "children" through Christ are NOT NOW inheritors -- they are spoken of only as heirs. An HEIR is one who has NOT YET come into his inheritance. So the dead in Christ even of our age have NOT received their inheritance either!

Now WHY has Abraham, even to this day, as yet not inherited the promise? Listen! Christ came to CONFIRM -- MAKE POSSIBLE -- THE FULFILLMENT of the PROMISE of eternal inheritance of the earth made to Abraham. This constitutes one of the "BETTER PROMISES" of the NEW TESTAMENT! Christ, in CONFIRMING these promises made to Abraham, preached always the GOSPEL OF THE KINGDOM OF GOD which is to occupy and govern the EARTH -- the SAME earth that has been promised to Abraham for an eternal inheritance.

Abraham will soon be BORN INTO the Kingdom of God! Abraham's inheritance is thus to be the KINGDOM OF GOD! The SAME INHERITANCE you and I may have by becoming Abraham's seed, through Christ.

To Inherit the Kingdom of God

1. Does Matthew 6:33 verify the fact that it is the KINGDOM OF GOD we are to strive to enter -- and NOT heaven?

2. Does Matthew 7:21 also verify the fact that the inheritance of the saved will be the Kingdom of God? It is the Kingdom OF heaven -- not IN heaven!

3. Does Ephesians 5:5 plainly show that the sinner will have NO INHERITANCE in the Kingdom of God? Don't these preceding scriptures plainly show that the inheritance of the saved is the KINGDOM OF GOD?

4. But that Kingdom, Jesus said, is NOT of this world --

THIS AGE! In His great prophecy of events now making the headlines in world news today, what did Jesus say in Luke 21:31?

COMMENT: The Kingdom of God will RULE THE WORLD. IT IS not yet established -- but today it is "NIGH AT HAND" -- and IT'S LATER THAN YOU THINK!

 PHOTO CAPTION: The earth is the Christian's inheritance -- not heaven. And why not the earth? There's nothing wrong with it -- except man's sins which have made it a desert wilderness and a slum-covered, garbage-riddled hulk! Christ is coming soon to STRAIGHTEN OUT what man has made crooked.

WHY is it that Abraham and all the "HEIRS according to the promise" must REMAIN heirs for a short time longer? There are several reasons. Let us see.

5. Has the Kingdom of God, of which Christians are HEIRS, been established upon this earth yet? -- what did Christ tell His disciples when they thought He would establish His world-ruling Kingdom in their day? Luke 19:11-13, 15.

COMMENT: Christ represented Himself here as the young nobleman going to the far country -- heaven -- to receive the right to RULE the Kingdom, showing it would be set up and would take over the rule of all nations at His SECOND COMING. The point is that the Kingdom of God has NOT YET been established on this earth so that Christians may inherit it!

6. Does Matthew 6:10 also prove that God's Kingdom is YET to be established ON OUR EARTH?

7. Is the record of each who is to receive this inheritance being kept in heaven? I Pet. 1:3, 4. WHEN IS the salvation of the saved revealed? And WHEN IS the possession of the inheritance given? Verse 5.

COMMENT: Note that the record of the inheritance is "reserved" -- is kept -- in heaven, and that salvation, and therefore the POSSESSION of the inheritance, is to be "revealed" -- given -- "in the LAST TIME" -- at the soon-coming END OF THIS AGE. This is additional proof that the Kingdom has NOT YET BEEN ESTABLISHED!

8. But there's still another reason why we CANNOT INHERIT the Kingdom at this present time. We are now composed of flesh and blood. Can we inherit the Kingdom while we are composed of this material? I Cor. 15:50.

COMMENT: No flesh and blood can INHERIT the Kingdom of God. The Kingdom of God is NOT A HUMAN KINGDOM -- there are NO HUMANS in it -- it is a DIVINE KINGDOM -- the God Kingdom! Our human bodies must be changed to another kind of material to become a PART of that Kingdom!

9. Does Paul say our flesh-and-blood bodies will be CHANGED? I Cor. 15:51, 53. Since we will be born of the Spirit then, of what will our bodies be composed? John 3:6. What is this process called -- being "born again"? John 3:3. And if we are in this manner "born again," can we "see" -- ENTER -- the Kingdom of God? Same verse.

COMMENT: Our mortal human bodies will then be CHANGED into SPIRIT BODIES -- bodies which can INHERIT the Kingdom of God. Our present flesh is corruptible, subject to aging and decay. But spirit things and spirit beings are ETERNALLY NEW.

10. How LONG will it take us to be changed from our present material substance into spirit? I Cor. 15:52, the first nine

words.

COMMENT: Now we begin to see why Abraham, and his children through Christ, have not as YET inherited the promises!

Inheritors at the Resurrection

But to go further. We cannot come into ETERNAL inheritance until we come into ETERNAL LIFE. And what is our only HOPE of inheriting eternal life? The RESURRECTION from the dead! For it is appointed to ALL once to die (Heb. 9:27) -- everyone of us must die even though it be for only a split second. Without a RESURRECTION no one would LIVE again.

Is your hope of a resurrection well founded? Do you actually have the PROMISE from God, Himself, that He will resurrect you? Here's what God says.

1. Did God, Himself, inspire the apostle Paul to pose the question, "IF there be NO resurrection of the dead ..."? I Cor. 15:13. What does God say of Christ, IF there is no resurrection? Same verse.

2. If this be the case, is our faith in a future resurrection in VAIN? I Cor. 15:14. And are those who are asleep in Christ PERISHED? Verse 18. Strong scripture, that!

COMMENT: The dead IN CHRIST are UTTERLY PERISHED -- UNLESS there is to be a RESURRECTION FROM THE DEAD! How DIFFERENT from the modern fables to which a deceived world has been turned today!

So Abraham, Isaac and Jacob are DEAD. And, unless there is to be a RESURRECTION -- a rising up FROM the grave they are PERISHED!

3. What did JESUS say to show there surely will be a resurrection? Mat. 22:31. WHAT IS being discussed here -- the RESURRECTION of the dead? Didn't God say He is the God of the LIVING -- not the dead? Verse 32.

COMMENT: Jesus clearly spoke of a FUTURE resurrection of the dead. He showed that the resurrection of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob -- who have been DEAD all these centuries -- is so SURE, it was AS IF it had already taken place! BY TWISTING this text many try to prove Abraham is not dead, but has already gone to and come into his promised inheritance -- just the OPPOSITE of what Jesus meant!

HOW Christ Made Our Inheritance Possible

1. What is SIN? I John 3:4. What is the PENALTY -- "the wages of" -- sin? Rom. 6:23. Has ALL mankind sinned? Rom. 3:23.

COMMENT: God is Creator and Owner of the universe and all that is within it. He is also the great LAWGIVER. Whoever is NOT OBEDIENT to Him, SINS! Sin causes so much sorrow, suffering, unhappiness and anguish, all who disobey God are worthy of death -- ETERNAL death! And ALL have sinned. ALL are therefore WORTHY OF ETERNAL DEATH. If WE were to PAY the penalty of our OWN sins, none of us would have eternal life -- none could inherit the Kingdom of God as an eternal inheritance.

2. But did Christ give Himself -- shed His LIFE BLOOD -- in our place, so that we need not have to pay the penalty of our sins and thus be deprived of eternal inheritance -- the Kingdom of God? I Tim. 2:5, 6 and Rom. 5:8-10.

COMMENT: By DYING -- by shedding His LIFE BLOOD -- Christ was able to pay for ALL the sins of mankind for ALL TIME because He was GOD INCARNATE -- GOD MADE FLESH! (John 1:14.) God, the

Father, also created all things BY Jesus Christ (Eph. 3:9; John 1:1-3). Therefore, as God and our Maker, Jesus' PHYSICAL life was of GREATER VALUE than the sum total of ALL human lives!

This is HOW Christ CONFIRMED -- made possible -- our INHERITANCE of the Kingdom for eternity. Through His DEATH, He made it POSSIBLE for us to have ETERNAL LIFE -- to exist for all eternity!

3. Did Christ leave a WILL, or last testament, at the time of His death? Heb. 9:15. Notice the word "testament." A "testament" is a "will." What does it PROMISE those who are called to salvation? Same verse. When a person makes a will, must he DIE BEFORE it comes into force? Verses 16-17. Are those who are to receive salvation called HEIRS? Heb. 1:14.

COMMENT: Christ wished to make eternal inheritance of the Kingdom of God available to all people. He did this by making a WILL -- A TESTAMENT. This is why the last fourth of your Bible is called the "New Testament." It teaches you HOW you may become an HEIR to the PROMISE OF ETERNAL INHERITANCE in the Kingdom of God which is to be established upon this earth!! A testament, or will, is of no effect unless the one making it DIES. Christ DIED SO that you may INHERIT the promises FROM HIM!

What We Must DO!

And now comes the CRUX OF THIS WHOLE LESSON! Is there anything that we must DO in order to inherit these priceless promises? Ponder this section well, for it reveals what we must DO in this life to become HEIRS and finally INHERITORS of God's Kingdom.

1. Did God the Father GIVE His only begotten Son so that we might become heirs to the promises? John 3:16.

2. Did Christ voluntarily GIVE Himself as our sacrifice in order that we might have this privilege? Luke 22:42. Was His body DISFIGURED more than that of any other man? Isa. 52:14. Did His perspiration appear as BLOOD at Gethsemane, shortly before He became our sacrifice? Luke 22:44. (His profuse sweat was tinged with blood!)

3. Is it because of Christ's suffering and death for us that God says we have been "bought" BY HIM? I Cor. 7:23. And is it God, therefore, whom we are now to SERVE? Same verse. But what do some thoughtless people say? Mal 3:14. Do some even go so far as to deny the Lord that "BOUGHT" them? II Pet 2:1.

4. What does Christ tell us, by example, to do IF we are to receive -- enter into -- the ETERNAL INHERITANCE? Mat. 19:17. Isn't this exactly the SAME thing that Abraham did? Gen. 26:5. Note the word "COMMANDMENTS."

5. Did Paul SERVE God? Acts 27:23. Doesn't he point out that even the service we give to our earthly bosses is to be considered as service rendered unto GOD? Col. 3:22-24.

6. Are we to be obedient in ALL THINGS? II Cor. 2:9. Even in the THOUGHTS we allow ourselves to think? II Cor. 10:5.

7. Why is obedience to God necessary today as it was in Abraham's day? Rom. 7:7, 12.

COMMENT: Keeping the Law -- God's commands -- is the ONLY way we may live in HARMONY with others, and with God. It's the ONLY way we can develop the CHARACTER OF GOD -- with the HELP of God's Holy Spirit -- so we can be BORN of God and INHERIT His Kingdom for eternity!

We Receive the Promises WHEN Jesus Returns

1. WHEN will Abraham and his children through Christ receive the promises? Will there be a SIGNAL given for this great event? I Cor. 15:52. Is this the LAST trump? Same verse. Our bodies are then changed from mortality to WHAT? Verse 53.

2. And what ELSE IS to happen at that very same time? I Thes. 4:16, 17. Will Abraham and his children through Christ -- both the dead and the living -- finally be "saved" -- caught up in the resurrection to be with Christ WHEREVER HE MAY BE from thenceforth? Verse 17. Since Christ has already been here once, doesn't this all happen at Christ's SECOND COMING? Same verses.

3. And WHERE does Christ go in that day? Zech. 14:4. Does He also begin to establish His world-ruling GOVERNMENT at that time? Zech. 14:9, and all verses to the end of the chapter. And will all the saints, or Christians -- Abraham and his children through Christ -- the HEIRS who are to inherit this EARTH forever -- be with the returning Christ? Verse 5, last part.

COMMENT: Yes, at the last trump, Christ will return to this earth -- this time as "KING of KINGS and LORD of LORDS," to reign and to rule all nations of the earth for the first time. When He comes to set up His Kingdom, THEN Abraham and his children in Christ who have died shall be RESURRECTED TO IMMORTALITY, to INHERIT THE PROMISE of the KINGDOM OF GOD -- a world-ruling GOVERNMENT headed and ruled by Christ, occupying the very LAND PROMISED TO ABRAHAM -- the land of PALESTINE, from the Nile to the Euphrates River. And this KINGDOM, composed of IMMORTALS which flesh and blood cannot enter, shall rule over all other FLESHLY nations of the earth during the Millennial Utopia!

The Promise Is NOT Heaven!

JESUS said: "Blessed are the meek: for they shall inherit THE EARTH" (Mat. 5:5). That's part of the Sermon on the Mount -- and certainly every Christian BELIEVES the Sermon on the Mount!

Then we must BELIEVE, if we are Christians, that what the saved inherit is THE EARTH -- and NOT HEAVEN! The inspired apostle John plainly said, "NO MAN HATH ASCENDED UP TO HEAVEN" (John 3:13). THE EVIDENCE IS OVERWHELMING!

1. WHAT do those that "wait upon the Lord" INHERIT? Ps. 37:9.

2. WHAT shall those blessed of God INHERIT? Ps. 37:22.

3. WHAT shall the righteous INHERIT, and HOW LONG shall they dwell there? Ps. 37:29.

4. And WHAT does God promise to those who "KEEP HIS WAY"? Ps. 37:34.

COMMENT: There is absolutely NO scripture in all the Bible that promises HEAVEN to the saved in Christ. And yet, most people seem to be oblivious to these positive, PLAIN STATEMENTS from God Almighty, and have carelessly taken for granted, WITHOUT QUESTION, the FALSE IDEA of "going to heaven"!

Notice the words Christ will utter at His imminent return: "WHEN the Son of man shall come in His Glory, and all the holy angels with Him, THEN shall He sit upon the THRONE of His glory blessed of my Father, INHERIT THE KINGDOM PREPARED FOR YOU FROM THE FOUNDATION OF THE WORLD" (Mat. 25:31, 34).

Yes, the KINGDOM of God is the PLACE PREPARED. Jesus said He went to PREPARE A PLACE for us in that Kingdom. He also said He went to GET FOR HIMSELF a Kingdom, and to RETURN. And WHEN He returns, as KING of kings, and when that Kingdom is established on EARTH, THEN it is that the joyful call goes out, "COME! ye

blessed of my Father, INHERIT THE KINGDOM PREPARED FOR YOU."