

Romans 4:13-25

Part 1: Heir of the World

4:13 For the promise, that he should be the heir of the world, was not to Abraham, or to his seed, through the law, but through the righteousness of faith.

“The heir (recipient, possessor, inheritor) of the world.” What is this referring too? Nowhere in the Old Testament does it state that Abraham would inherit the world except maybe in Isaiah 41:2.

We know Abraham was promised physical, earthly land (Genesis 15:18-21, 17:8, Exodus 23:29-31, Exodus 32:13).

This promise of being heir of the world is likely referring to the new world to come. The new heaven and new earth and new Jerusalem.

Look at Hebrews 11:8-16.

What does world mean? 1 Samuel 2:8

“World without end” – Isaiah 45:17, Matthew 12:32, Mark 10:30, Luke 20:35, Ephesians 3:21, Hebrews 2:5

“End of the world” – Matthew 13:39, 24:14; Hebrews 9:26

The end of the world according to the Bible takes place at 1) the death of Jesus Christ and 2) the Second Coming of Christ. The world ended at the death of Christ because Satan’s dominion over the spiritual realm was destroyed. The world ends at the Second Coming of Christ because Satan’s dominion over the physical realm will be destroyed. This is what the Bible calls the end of the world.

So when God promised Abraham to be the heir of the world he is likely referring to the new world that comes after the 2nd coming of Christ, and Hebrews 11 seems to back this up.

The Bible also says we are heirs according to the same promise (Galatians 3:29) and that Christians are children of Abraham (Galatians 3:7, Romans 4:16-17).

The Bible says we are heirs of God (Romans 8:17) and we shall inherit all things (Revelation 21:7)

Part 2: Age of Accountability

4:14-15 For if they which are of the law be heirs, faith is made void, and the promise made of none effect: Because the law worketh wrath: for where no law is, there is no transgression.

Where there is no law there is no transgression (Romans 5:12-14, Romans 7:1-13).

If there is no law, sin is not imputed.

See also Romans 2:12-16.

Once a man has an understanding of good and evil, he is held accountable (Deuteronomy 1:39, Numbers 14:28-31, Matthew 18:1-10). This comes at different ages for everybody, the scripture is not clear. But once you know what God says and willingly disobey God, you die and sin is charged to your account.

We don't have to worry about children going to hell if they die. There is no Limbo just like there is no purgatory. They don't know right from wrong, good from evil. But once they know these things and commit sin against God, sin is imputed unto them and they die.

The age of accountability is different for everyone.