



FAITH AND GENETICS

“...so that he would become the father of all those who believe.” Romans 4:11

1. Introduction

Recently we have witnessed the Genomic Era during which more than 20,000 protein-coding human genes and thousands of genes for functional RNAs were sequenced. At this moment, we are beginning to identify their functions, how they interact with each other and orchestrate the beautiful molecular symphony within each cell. While Man dazzles the biological ‘book of life’, he remains ignorant about God’s ‘book of life’ (Revelation 3:5 [1]).

The Bible reveals to us a central element in God’s plan for the salvation of mankind: **Faith**. However, Faith is not a human biological characteristic, it is not inherited from our earthly parents, therefore, it is not in our DNA; it comes from our heavenly Father (Ephesians 2:8 [1]). On the other hand, it turns out that people from the same family are genetically similar and, because of this, it is said that they “have the same blood” - an aspect that is based on Genetics, the science that studies the transmission of characteristics over the generations. In this article, we will look at the relationship between Faith and Genetics, through the Blood of Jesus - which is another key element in the Bible. We will compare symbolically two inheritances: (i) human genetic inheritance and (ii) ‘genetic’ inheritance from God the Father.

2. Human genetic inheritance

In the Old Testament, God demonstrates special zeal with biological ties of familiar blood (human genetic inheritance). A notorious example is presented in the search for a wife for Isaac. Aware of God’s promise, Abraham understood that Isaac could not marry a Canaanite woman, whose customs and gods were foreign. In this sense, Abraham makes his servant swear that he would seek among

his relatives (Hebrews) a wife for Isaac (Genesis 24:3-4 [1]). He knew that within his family there were women who would believe in the same God. Abraham, therefore, sought to ensure that his son Isaac would perpetuate a genetic (biological blood) and **faithful** lineage (that is, which would have the same Faith manifested in him). To find one who carried the family’s blood, the servant searched within the relatives; and to find the one who would have a life of Faith, Abraham’s servant asks for a sign (*the one who draws water from the well, for him and his camels*; Genesis 24:14 [1]). This characteristic was found in Rebekah, who symbolized the Faithful Church, which has had experiences with the spring of water welling up to Eternal Life (John 4:14) [1].

3. ‘Genetic’ inheritance from God the Father

The Bible narrates that Jesus, as a man, did not produce an offspring, thus evidencing that the intention of God the Father was not to transmit faith biologically; instead, to grant it directly to humans from himself - his inheritance.

However, how is this characteristic passed on to humans? One of the figures that the Bible uses is the **New Birth** (John 3:3 [1]). Note that for the birth of a biological child, father and mother must contribute with their genetic materials; the child is a genetic mixture of both (a biparental genetic inheritance). However, in the new birth, that is, when we accept Lord Jesus as our savior, we become children of one Father - our God (Ephesians 4:6 [1]); then, we have one parent only (uniparental inheritance) (Figure 1). Therefore, everything we receive comes from God the Father, especially Faith! Again, it is essential that we understand that we are unable to generate true faith, it must come from him. The new birth allows us to inherit the ‘genetics’ of the Eternal Father, and to

become brothers in Christ (spiritual sons of Abraham). In particular, we are given a New Name (Revelation 2:17 [1]), and we have a Heavenly Home (John 14:1-3 [1])!

It is interesting to observe that, in the Old Testament, the eyes of God focused on the bond of biological blood (**one people - Israel**). However, commencing with Jesus through the present period of Grace, the attention of God's love is on the bond of the Blood of Jesus (**one body - the Church**). The Bible does inform us that the Church of Christ is seen by God as one body - the servants of God are members of that body, united by faith - the Holy Spirit is the blood and Christ is the head of the Church (1 Corinthians 12 [1]). It is noteworthy that the characteristics of the Body of Christ are of the Works of Redemption [2], surpassing in several aspects the characteristics of the biological body, the Works of Creation [2], such as the eternity compared to a lifespan limitation of 120 years.

As we observed earlier, when Man experiences the new birth, he acquires a new 'genetic identity'. This provides him with several spiritual characteristics of the works of redemption, among them: faith and abundant life with no temporal limitation. Therefore, the Bible instructs us that by accepting Jesus as our only and sufficient savior, we receive **eternal life**.

4. Conclusions

The biology of Man is incapable of generating faith, and his genetics limits his life span. When Abraham sent his servant to seek a wife amidst his relatives, he was acting under a prophecy. That is, in this eternal project, Abraham who is considered to be the **Father of Faith** (Romans 4:11 [1]). Prophetically he himself was a type of **God the Father**, the transmitter of this eternal characteristic to humans. Isaac, his son, was a prophetic type of **God the Son** – the Lord Jesus. Abraham's servant typified the Holy Spirit, who is in close contact with the bride Rebekah – typifying the Church. She, in turn, ought to be of the same kindred, to have the

same 'genetic identity', the same spiritual characteristics, including Faith. Only through the new birth do we inherit the faith and the blood of the heavenly family - the Blood of Jesus - which enables the natural man to be identified as a child of God and to become a citizen of heaven.

Therefore, it is observed that Faith is a key aspect in the Bible. It is the immaterial bond between God and Man. We possess thousands of extremely valuable genes in our genome, inherited from our biological parents and which allow us to live on this Earth. However, Faith is **the inheritance** from our heavenly Father, which allows eternal life.

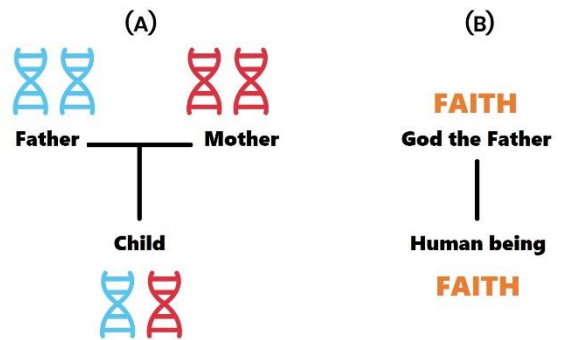


Figure 1. Human genetic inheritance (A) and the 'genetic' inheritance from God the Father (B). At biological birth, we inherit half of the genetic materials from our two parents. In the new birth, we inherit everything from our only Father - faith.



5. References

[1] The Holy Bible. New English Version.

[2] Faith: the missing link. Tarcísio N. Teles. Presented by Igreja Cristã Maranata. Veja Magazine, Edition 2682 (04/15/2020).

About the author. Tiago Campos Pereira, deacon and member of Science and Faith Group of the Maranatha Christian Church, graduated in biological sciences from the State University of Campinas (Unicamp - Brazil), M.Sc. and Ph.D. in Genetics and Molecular Biology from Unicamp, with a postdoctoral training at the University of Cambridge (United Kingdom). He is a professor at the University of Sao Paulo (USP - Brazil) in the area of Molecular Genetics of Anhydrobiosis.

Curriculum vitae: <http://lattes.cnpq.br/0142820797911175>

E-mail: cienciaefe@presbiterio.org.br

Site: www.igrejacristamaranata.org.br

Facebook: [igrejacristamaranata](https://www.facebook.com/igrejacristamaranata)

Instagram: [@igrejacristamaranata_oficial](https://www.instagram.com/igrejacristamaranata_oficial)

TV Web Maanaim: radiomaanaim.com.br **YouTube:** Igreja Cristã Maranata