



In search of our spiritual ancestors . . .

1

Scriptural Reading

*When **Abram** was ninety-nine years old, the LORD appeared to him and said, “I am God Almighty; walk before me and be blameless.” (Genesis 17:1 NIV)*

*“I will confirm **my covenant** between me and you and will greatly increase your numbers.” (Genesis 17:2 NIV)*

2

Scriptural Reading

*Abram fell facedown, and God said to him, “As for me, this is **my covenant** with you: You will be the father of many nations.” (Genesis 17:3–4 NIV)*

*“No longer will you be called Abram; your name will be **Abraham**, for I have made you a father of many nations.” (Genesis 17:3–5 NIV)*

3

Scriptural Reading

*“I will make you **very fruitful**; I will make nations of you, and kings will come from you.” (Genesis 17:6 NIV)*

*“I will establish **my covenant** as an everlasting covenant between me and you and your descendants after you for the generations to come, to be your God and the God of your descendants after you.” (Genesis 17:7 NIV)*

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Introduction

DNA ancestry tests are all the vogue right now.

All one has to do is swab the inside of their mouth with a Q-Tip and learn about their family tree.

Thanks to such DNA services such as 23andMe, Family Tree DNA, AncestryDNA, or Living DNA you can jump into the **worldwide gene pool** and discover a world of information about your heritage.



5

Introduction

“Thanks to scientific breakthroughs over the last few years,” says a website called Exploring Life's Mysteries (March 6, 2017), “you can now fill in more of your **ancestry puzzle** than ever before.”

Just order a DNA test kit online, take it yourself and mail it in to get your individual report.

You may uncover exciting facts about your **family background** or discover that your **ancestors** are not the people you thought they were.



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DNA Test

A few years ago, I took one of these **DNA tests** as I needed help in tracing my **McCowan ancestors**.

All I knew was that the McCowans came to **Kentucky** from Pennsylvania early in the 19th Century.

And that we were probably of **Scottish** or **Scot/Irish** origins.



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DNA Test

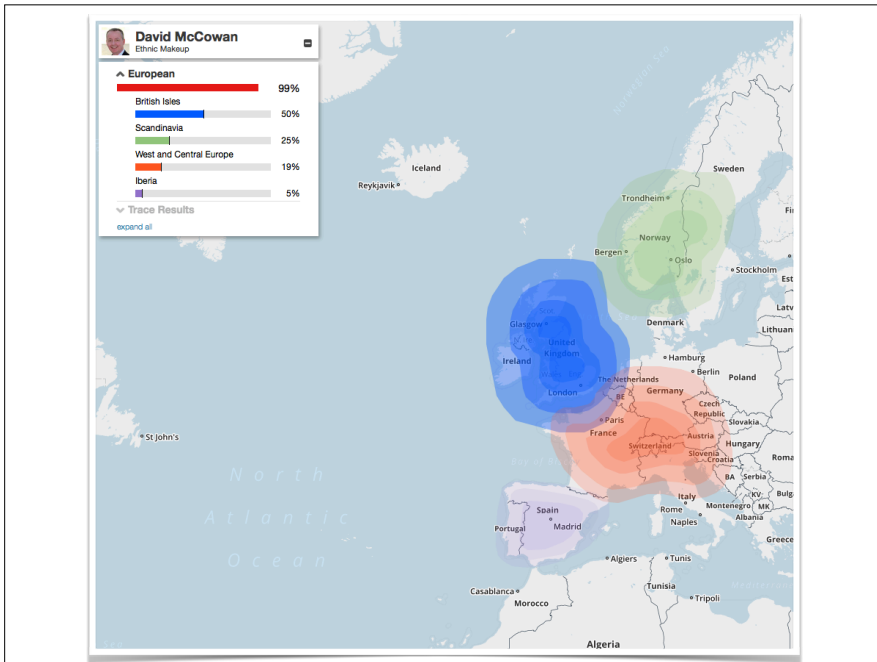
What I found out by sending my DNA samples to **FamilyTreeDNA** was shocking.

According to the **Y-chromosome**, The male origin of my McCowan heritage wasn't Scottish or Scot/Irish, but **Norwegian**.

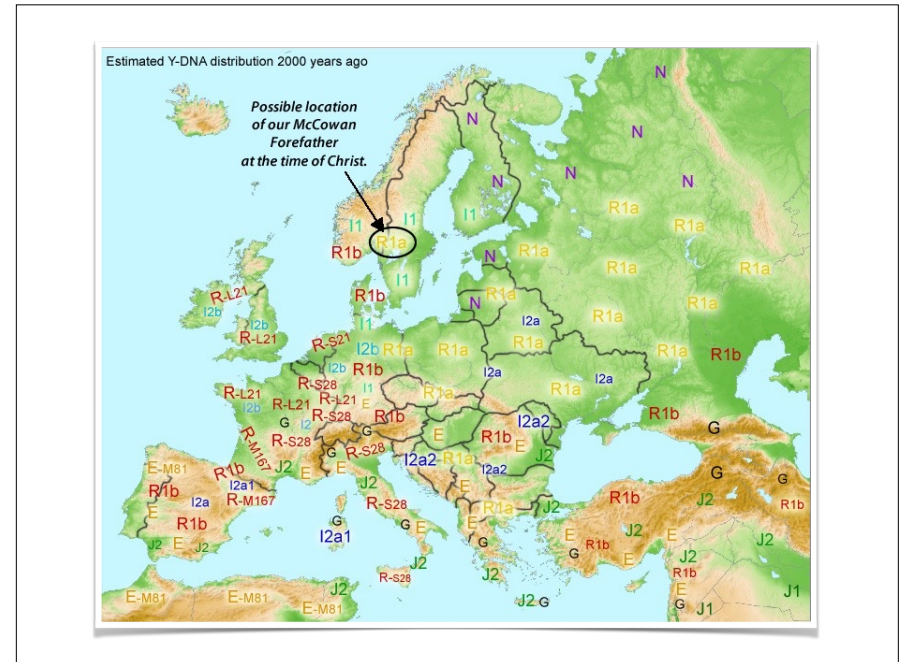
This explains, why I have always had a “**pining for the fjords.**”



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Ancient Ancestor



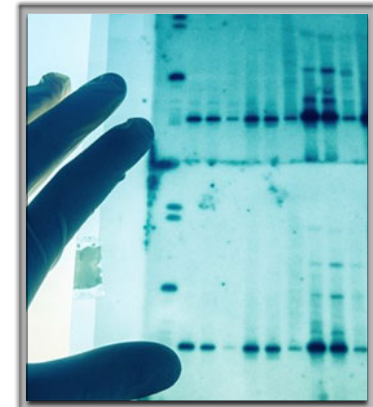
Erik the Big Saga Teller

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DNA Test

The point of all of this is that **deep inside** each of us we all have a recording of who we are and who we belong to.

You can't necessarily see it, but it is there and it reveals a lot about us and **our ancestors**.



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Abraham

The book of **Genesis** also contains reliable and important information about our ancestors in the faith, **Abraham and Sarah**.

For Jews being related to Abraham is what made them special as **God's children**.

No wonder it was a major blow to their **ethnic pride**, when it was discovered God had other children who were related to Abraham through other means.

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Jerusalem Riot

When the **Apostle Paul** returns to Jerusalem along with a generous offering from Gentile churches, the brothers tell him that many Jews believe that he is an enemy of the **Jewish faith** and their traditions. [See Acts 21]

To prove his innocence Paul goes to the Temple and shows that he is "living in obedience to the law."

However, this visit causes **a riot** and Roman troops have to come and rescue Paul from the angry mob.

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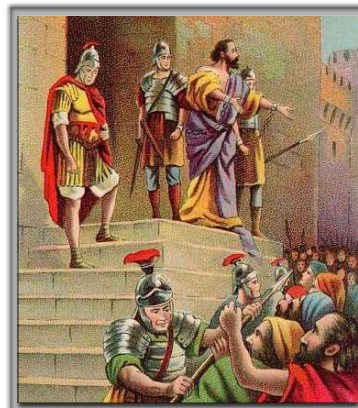
Jerusalem Riot

In his defense, Paul gives the crowd his **testimony** about Jesus.

However, what throws the crowd into a frenzy is when Paul says God has called him to preach this new faith to the **Gentiles**. (Acts 22:21)

The crowd listened to Paul until he said this. Then they raised their voices and shouted, "**Rid the earth of him! He's not fit to live!**" (Acts 22:22 NIV)

So why would the Jews be so upset over this?



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Sons of Abraham

The Jews believed that what made them special as children of God was their **genealogical** connection to Abraham.

So when someone implied that this was no longer critical, it made them **furious**.

And to tell you the truth, **Jesus** encountered the same problem, when he rebuked the Jews for being slaves to sin and that their real father was the devil.

They answered him, "*We are **Abraham's descendants** and have never been slaves of anyone. How can you say that we shall be set free?*" (John 8:33 NIV)

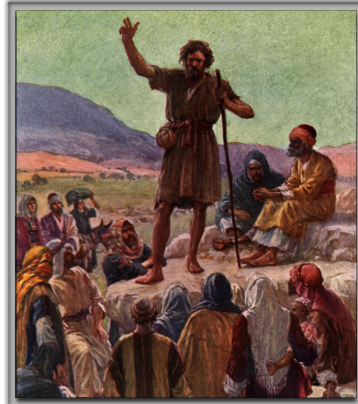
Jesus then responds, "*I know you are **Abraham's descendants**. Yet you are ready to kill me, because you have **no room for my word**.*" (John 8:37 NIV)

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John the Baptist

But when he saw many of the **Pharisees** and **Sadducees** coming to where he was baptizing, he said to them: "**You brood of vipers!** Who warned you to flee from the coming wrath?" (Matthew 3:7 NIV)

"**Produce fruit in keeping with repentance.** And do not think you can say to yourselves, 'We have Abraham as our father.' I tell you that out of these **stones** God can raise up children for **Abraham.**" (Matthew 3:8–9 NIV)



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Romans 9

In my opinion, understanding **Romans 9** is one of the most important requirements for any serious Bible student.

For within it contains the whole reason for **Israel's failure** and a clue to our own **spiritual DNA** and God's purpose in election.

And why did Israel fail? According to the Apostle Paul, *For not all who are descended from **Israel** are Israel. Nor because they are his descendants are they all **Abraham's children.*** (Romans 9:6–7 NIV)

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Romans 9

In other words, it is not the **natural children** who are God's children, but it is the **children of the promise** who are regarded as **Abraham's offspring.** (Romans 9:8 NIV)

And who are the "**children of the promise?**"

They are those who are born supernaturally (like **Issac**) by **God's mercy** and **power.** (See Romans 9:7-8)

Not by **their desire** or **effort**, but by the **will** of the **Sovereign Lord.** (See Romans 9:16)

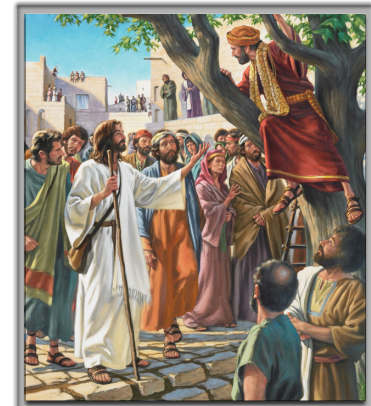
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Wee Little Man

In the Gospel of Luke, there is a story about a man named, **Zacchaeus**, who lived in the city of Jericho.

He was hated by the Jews because he was a chief tax collector and was wealthy (Luke 19:2 NIV)

However, when he heard that Jesus was coming, he ran ahead and because he was short climbed a sycamore-fig tree.



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Wee Little Man

When Jesus reached the spot, he looked up and said to him, "**Zacchaeus, come down immediately. I must stay at your house today.**" (Luke 19:5 NIV)

All the people saw this and began to mutter, "**He has gone to be the guest of a 'sinner.'**" (Luke 19:7 NIV)

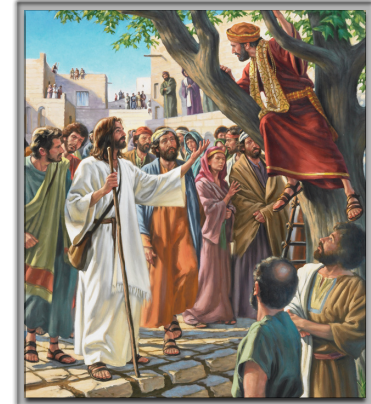


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Wee Little Man

But Zacchaeus stood up and said to the **Lord**, "Look, Lord! Here and now I give half of my possessions to the poor, and if I have cheated anybody out of anything, I will pay back four times the amount." (Luke 19:8 NIV)

Jesus said to him, "Today salvation has come to this house, because this man, too, is a **son of Abraham.**" (Luke 19:9 NIV)



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Nathanael

Philip found **Nathanael** and told him, "We have found **the one** Moses wrote about in the Law, and about whom the prophets also wrote — **Jesus of Nazareth, the son of Joseph.**" (John 1:44–45 NIV)

"Nazareth! Can anything good come from there?" Nathanael asked. "**Come and see,**" said Philip. (John 1:46 NIV)



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Nathanael

When Jesus saw Nathanael approaching, he said of him, "Here is a **true Israelite, in whom there is nothing false.**" (John 1:47 NIV)

"How do you know me?" Nathanael asked. Jesus answered, "**I saw you while you were still under the fig tree before Philip called you.**" (John 1:48 NIV)

Then Nathanael declared, "Rabbi, you are the Son of God; you are the King of Israel." (John 1:49 NIV)

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Summary

God looks at the heart and He knows who has a **"heart to serve"** Him, even before they even come to faith.

*"I am the **good shepherd**; I know my sheep and my sheep know me . . ." (John 10:14 NIV)*

*"I have **other sheep** that are not of this sheep pen. I must bring them also. They too will **listen to my voice**, and there shall be one flock and one shepherd." (John 10:16 NIV)*



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More Evidence

In **Corinth**, the Apostle Paul was having much success among the Jews and the Church was growing.

However, there also was **much persecution**.

In a **dream**, **Jesus** appears to Paul and encourages him to keep on preaching.

As he says, *"For I am with you, and no one is going to attack and harm you, because I have **many people** in this city."* (Acts 18:10)

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Summary

Whether we know it or not God **chose us** to be in Christ, long before we actually came to Christ.

For it is the Lord who is constantly at work—*searching hearts and examining the minds* to see who has the capacity or right spiritual DNA to serve Him.

So when He finds someone who has **"room in their heart"** for God's Word, they are equipped and enabled to **believe** the Gospel of our Lord, Jesus Christ.

As it is written in Acts, *When the Gentiles heard this, they were glad and honored the word of the Lord; and all who were **appointed** for eternal life believed.* (Acts 13:48 NIV)

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Sermon on the Mount

Jesus calls out to the **spiritual children of Abraham** on the **Sermon on the Mount** when he says:

*"Blessed are the **poor in spirit** (they who recognize their need for redemption), for theirs is the kingdom of heaven." (Matthew 5:3 NIV)*

*"Blessed are those who **mourn** (they who grieve over their poor spiritual state), for they will be comforted." (Matthew 5:4 NIV, See also Romans 7:14-25)*

*"Blessed are the **meek** (they who are submissive, yielding, and willing), for they will inherit the earth." (Matthew 5:5 NIV)*

*"Blessed are those who **hunger and thirst for righteousness** (they who want to do right), for they will be filled." (Matthew 5:6 NIV)*

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Summary

The **point** of all of this is as follows:

Even though we were **sinner**s and in need of mercy, God **chose** us to be on His **team**. Not because of anything we had done, but because He saw in our hearts that we had the same **spiritual DNA** as Abraham.

And to tell you the truth, there are **people** all around us who are spiritually related to Abraham as well.

All they need is **faith**, and *faith comes from hearing the message, and the message is heard through the word of Christ*. (Romans 10:17 NIV)

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Conclusion

We who are in **Christ** are special because we are related to Abraham and thus have the right to be called **“children of God,”** *children born not of natural descent, nor of human decision or a husband’s will, but born of God.* (John 1:13 NIV)

So then, be **very encouraged** for you are special and God **chose** you because “you had room in your heart” for **God’s Word**.

Therefore, let your **light shine**, because all around you are **spiritual relatives** who are primed and ready and just need **reasons in which to believe**.

I tell you, open your eyes and look at the fields! They are ripe for harvest. (John 4:35 NIV)

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