

Children of Promise; Galatians 4:28-31

I. Isaac and Ishmael

A. Galatians 4:21–23; 21 Tell me, you who desire to be under the law, do you not listen to the law? 22 For it is written that Abraham had two sons, one by a slave woman and one by a free woman. 23 But the son of the slave was born according to the flesh, while the son of the free woman was born through promise.

B. Sarah and Hagar

1. Born according to the flesh

a) Genesis 16:1–4; 1 Now Sarai, Abram’s wife, had borne him no children. She had a female Egyptian servant whose name was Hagar. 2 And Sarai said to Abram, “Behold now, the Lord has prevented me from bearing children. Go in to my servant; it may be that I shall obtain children by her.” And Abram listened to the voice of Sarai. 3 So, after Abram had lived ten years in the land of Canaan, Sarai, Abram’s wife, took Hagar the Egyptian, her servant, and gave her to Abram her husband as a wife. 4 And he went in to Hagar, and she conceived. And when she saw that she had conceived, she looked with contempt on her mistress.

2. Born according to the promise

a) Genesis 15:4–6; 4 And behold, the word of the Lord came to him: “This man shall not be your heir; your very own son shall be your heir.” 5 And he brought him outside and said, “Look toward heaven, and number the stars, if you are able to number them.” Then he said to him, “So shall your offspring be.” 6 And he believed the Lord, and he counted it to him as righteousness.

b) Genesis 17:15–19; 15 And God said to Abraham, “As for Sarai your wife, you shall not call her name Sarai, but Sarah shall be her name. 16 I will bless her, and moreover, I will give you a son by her. I will bless her, and she shall become nations; kings of peoples shall come from her.” 17 Then Abraham fell on his face and laughed and said to himself, “Shall a child be born to a man who is a hundred years old? Shall Sarah, who is ninety years old, bear a child?” 18 And Abraham said to God, “Oh that Ishmael might live before you!” 19 God said, “No, but Sarah your wife shall bear you a son, and you shall call his name Isaac. I will establish my covenant with him as an everlasting covenant for his offspring after him.

C. One was born according to the fleshly desire of Sarai to bear her husband a child

D. One was born according to the promise given to Abram by God

II. Two Covenants

A. Galatians 4:24–27; 24 Now this may be interpreted allegorically: these women are two covenants. One is from Mount Sinai, bearing children for slavery; she is Hagar. 25 Now Hagar is Mount Sinai in Arabia; she corresponds to the present Jerusalem, for she is in slavery with her children. 26 But the Jerusalem above is free, and she is our mother. 27 For it is written, “Rejoice, O barren one who does not bear; break forth and cry aloud, you who are not in labor! For the children of the desolate one will be more than those of the one who has a husband.”

B. The events in Genesis serve as an allegory (a story in which the characters and events are symbols that stand for ideas about human life or for a political or historical situation)

C. Each of the women stand for the two covenants of God

D. Hagar, the old covenant given at Mount Sinai in Arabia; present Jerusalem

1. Jerusalem was, at present, in bondage to Rome

2. "The Jews themselves universally recognized the law as a practical bondage (Acts 15:10; Matthew 23:4)." McGarvey
 3. Acts 15:10; Now, therefore, why are you putting God to the test by placing a yoke on the neck of the disciples that neither our fathers nor we have been able to bear?
 4. Matthew 23:4; They tie up heavy burdens, hard to bear, and lay them on people's shoulders, but they themselves are not willing to move them with their finger.
 5. This covenant had served its purpose and been replaced
- E. Sarah, the new covenant; the New Jerusalem
1. The Jerusalem above represents the new covenant, the Christian age, the church
 2. The difference is physical (present Jerusalem) verses Spiritual (New Jerusalem)
 3. Romans 8:12–17; 12 So then, brothers, we are debtors, not to the flesh, to live according to the flesh. 13 For if you live according to the flesh you will die, but if by the Spirit you put to death the deeds of the body, you will live. 14 For all who are led by the Spirit of God are sons of God. 15 For you did not receive the spirit of slavery to fall back into fear, but you have received the Spirit of adoption as sons, by whom we cry, "Abba! Father!" 16 The Spirit himself bears witness with our spirit that we are children of God, 17 and if children, then heirs—heirs of God and fellow heirs with Christ, provided we suffer with him in order that we may also be glorified with him.
- F. We are not children of slavery, the present Jerusalem
- ### III. Children of Promise
- A. We are the children of promise, the New Jerusalem
- B. Galatians 4:28–5:1; 28 Now you, brothers, like Isaac, are children of promise. 29 But just as at that time he who was born according to the flesh persecuted him who was born according to the Spirit, so also it is now. 30 But what does the Scripture say? "Cast out the slave woman and her son, for the son of the slave woman shall not inherit with the son of the free woman." 31 So, brothers, we are not children of the slave but of the free woman. 1 For freedom Christ has set us free; stand firm therefore, and do not submit again to a yoke of slavery.
- C. We have been set free from bondage
1. Romans 8:1–2; 1 There is therefore now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus. 2 For the law of the Spirit of life has set you free in Christ Jesus from the law of sin and death.
 2. Acts 2:39; For the promise is for you and for your children and for all who are far off, everyone whom the Lord our God calls to himself."
 3. Ephesians 2:12–13; 12 remember that you were at that time separated from Christ, alienated from the commonwealth of Israel and strangers to the covenants of promise, having no hope and without God in the world. 13 But now in Christ Jesus you who once were far off have been brought near by the blood of Christ.
- D. Stand Firm - to hold one's ground
1. "The Patriot" - the final battle scene, Mel Gibson uses the American Flag to rally the militia from retreat to advance
 2. We have been set free, "For freedom, Christ has set us free"
 3. Don't go back into bondage
 - a) Whatever you have been set free from, don't go back
 - b) Whatever you gave up for Christ, it is not worth going back to
 - c) Philippians 3:8; Indeed, I count everything as loss because of the surpassing worth of knowing Christ Jesus my Lord. For his sake I have suffered the loss of all things and count them as rubbish, in order that I may gain Christ

IV. Freedom

- A. We are no longer under bondage, but free in Christ
- B. Do not return back into bondage
- C. Stand firm, we are the children of promise