

## **BORN AGAIN FREEDOM**

**INTRODUCTION:** In this section of Paul's letter, he uses the illustration of Hagar, the mother of Ishmael, and Sarah, the mother of Isaac as an example of the law verses grace. He goes on to demonstrate how one is of slavery and one is of promise, emphasizing that we are now children of promise.

*Galatians 4:21-31*

### **I. TWO SONS: NATURAL EFFORT VS. DIVINE PROMISE**

A. Paul highlights the two sons of Abraham: Ishmael and Isaac. *vv.21-22*

1. Paul introduces this section by asking if they really know what the law says? *v.21*
2. Paul isn't going to take them to the law as given to Moses in the wilderness, but takes them back to Abraham.
3. He then dives into the story of the bondwoman and the freewoman. *v.22*

B. Ishmael was born according to the flesh, while Isaac according to the promise. *vv.23*

1. Abraham had been given a promise by God. *Genesis 15:3-6, Isaiah 55:8-9*
2. Through Sarah's encouragement, Abraham attempted to bring about the promise through his own effort. *Genesis 16:1-5*
3. God returned to Abraham and let him know that his miraculous hand would enable Sarah to bear a son. *Genesis 17:15-19*

C. Are we trying to reach God through works of the flesh or by trusting in the promise? v.23

1. This is the point that Paul is getting across right from the beginning.
2. He's drawing a sharp line between flesh and promise.  
*Galatians 3:7*
3. He is not giving them a third option.

## II. TWO COVENANTS: SLAVERY VS. FREEDOM

A. The two women are symbolic of the two covenants.

1. The one covenant is the one from Mount Sinai which was given to Moses. v.24-25
2. The other covenant is that which comes directly from heaven. v.26,  
*Zechariah 8:3-5, Matthew 4:17, Luke 11:2*
3. Jesus is the one who came down from heaven. *John 3:13, John 8:23*

B. The law can only condemn and has no power to free someone from sin.

1. The law from Mount Siani gives birth to bondage. v.24
2. Those associated with Jerusalem and follow the law are walking in the same bondage. v.25
3. If you're in bondage, you're not free. *John 8:36*

C. Those who were once barren rely on grace which produces life. v.27

1. This takes us back to Abraham, who knew he and Sarah could no longer have a child through their own strength. *Genesis 17:17*
2. It would take a miraculous act of God's grace for Sarah to become pregnant.
3. Our relationship with God is not established by our works, but by the free gift of salvation. *Ephesians 2:8-9*

### III. TWO DESTINIES: PERSECUTION VS. INHERITANCE

A. The one born of the flesh mocked the one born of the promise.

1. First of all, Paul is making the point that we are like Isaac, children of promise. v.28
2. On the day Isaac was weaned, Ishmael made fun of him. v. 29, *Genesis 21:8-9*
3. In today's Christian world, those who walk in legalism look down upon those who simply believe by faith.

B. We are to cast out the slave woman and her son. v.30

1. Sarah was greatly displeased and asked Abraham to send Hagar away. *Genesis 21:10*
2. Paul is making the point that we cannot allow the bondage of the law to mix with the freedom obtained by grace.
3. The descendants of Ishmael continually warred against the Israelites and eventually gave rise to the Islamic religion.

C. We are to identify with the child born of the free woman. v.31

1. Our identity is rooted in the freedom Christ purchased for us.
2. Just as Isaac was born according to the Spirit, so are we. v.29,  
*John 3:5-6*
3. This speaks to our eternal relationship with God. v.31,  
*John 8:35-36*

**CONCLUSION:** Paul has further illustrated to the Galatians, just who they were in Christ. He is telling them to cast aside the law and place their faith in Jesus. All of this leads us to Chapter 5 where he begins to speak of Christian liberty.