

# THE EPISTLE TO THE GALATIANS

## CHAPTER 4:21-31

MEDIA REFERENCE NUMBER SM-451 JULY 07, 2002

THE TITLE OF THE MESSAGE:

**“THE BELIEVER’S BIRTH PLACE”**

SUBJECT TOPICALLY REFERENCED UNDER:

**Freedom, Sons of God, Liberty, Position**

**INTRODUCTION**

*to the text*

*Galatians 4:21-31*

The Work of Grace will Always be  
Under Attack.

Acts 15:1-6

1 And certain men came down from Judea and taught the brethren, "Unless you are circumcised according to the custom of Moses, you cannot be saved." 2 Therefore, when Paul and Barnabas had no small dissension and dispute with them, they determined that Paul and Barnabas and certain others of them should go up to Jerusalem, to the apostles and elders, about this question. 3 So, being sent on their way by the church, they passed through Phoenicia and Samaria, describing the conversion of the Gentiles; and they caused great joy to all the brethren. 4 And when they had come to Jerusalem, they were received by the church and the apostles and the elders; and they reported all things that God had done with them. 5 But some of the sect of the Pharisees who believed rose up, saying, "It is necessary to circumcise them, and to command them to keep the law of Moses." 6 Now the apostles and elders came together to consider this matter.

# THE BELIEVER'S BIRTH PLACE

## 1.) *The believer's family tree*

vv. 21-23

21 Tell me, you who **desire to be under the law**, do you not hear the law? 22 For it is written that Abraham had **two sons**: the **one by a bondwoman**, the **other by a freewoman**. 23 But he who was of the bondwoman was **born according to the flesh**, and he of the freewoman **through promise**,

### I.) *His-torical* Background

## Genesis 16 through Genesis 21

### *The believer's family tree*

#### a.) *Begins with a checkered past*

v.21

Tell me, you who **desire to be under the law**,  
do you not hear the law?

## The Shouts “Perfection or Bust”

Romans 5:12-13

12 Therefore, just as through one man sin entered the world, and death through sin, and thus death spread to all men, because all sinned--13 (For until the law sin was in the world, but sin is not imputed when there is no law.

### Sacrifice(s)

### *The believer's family tree*

#### b.) *It's given a message of hope*

v.22-23

22 For it is written that Abraham had **two sons**:  
the **one by a bondwoman**, the **other by a freewoman**.  
23 “But” he who was of the bondwoman was **born according to the flesh**, and he of the freewoman **through promise**,

# “Hey Galatians - The Old Testament Says...”

Romans 15:4

For whatever things were written before were written for our learning, that we through the patience and comfort of the Scriptures might have hope.

1 Corinthians 10:11

**Now all these things happened** to them as examples, and they were written for our admonition, on whom the ends of the ages have come.

## **History and the Bible are in Divine Agreement**

**From Ishmael came the Arab Peoples  
From Isaac came the Hebrews**

God had promised Abraham that He was going to provide for him a future.

### **But God always does things according to His schedule**

And so Abraham had to wait, and wait, and wait until Abraham determined that he had waited long enough.

Until Sara came up with a good,  
reasonable, logical, sensible plan to bring about God's wishes for their lives.

“Abraham, have sex with my personal assistant Hagar. The baby born to you and her can become ours. We'll help God out by pulling this thing off and we can stop this stupid waiting game...”

Abraham... “Ahhh OK”

I wonder how many sons of the flesh do we have running around?  
Little things that we give birth to when we...

- Sons of Panic
- Sons of Lying
- Sons of Manipulation
- Sons of Worry
- Sons of Greed
- Sons of Worldly Wisdom and Logic
- Sons of Human Effort (the Ishmaels of life)

Genesis 17:18-19

18 And Abraham said to God, "Oh, that Ishmael might live before You!" 19 Then God said: "No, Sarah your wife shall bear you a son, and you shall call his name Isaac; I will establish My covenant with him for an everlasting covenant, and with his descendants after him.

## When we fail to wait for God,

We will always be scheming on the next super deal. This is going to be the deal of a lifetime. Just watch what happens when you get involved in this little known secret...

James 4:13-15

13 Come now, you who say, "Today or tomorrow we will go to such and such a city, spend a year there, buy and sell, and make a profit"; 14 whereas you do not know what will happen tomorrow. For what is your life? It is even a vapor that appears for a little time and then vanishes away. 15 Instead you ought to say, "If the Lord wills, we shall live and do this or that."

Can you say that God is into –  
That thing that you're so involved with?

### *The believer's family tree*

**c.) It has two branches you "cannot" climb v.23**

23 "But" (greek: strong adversative) he who was of the bondwoman was **born according to the flesh**, and he of the freewoman **through promise**, and he (Isaac) of the freewoman **through promise**,

## ***Isaac was born by the power of God***

God waited until their reproductive powers had died.

## ***Isaac brought joy to the home***

The believer's salvation is characterized by the fruit of joy

## ***Isaac was weaned to grow mature***

Our salvation begins our journey with God, it isn't the end

## ***Isaac was persecuted for being who he was***

The flesh life (Ishmael) has no problems until another one is born (Isaac)

## ***Isaac represented the hope of God***

Romans 4:18-25

18 who, contrary to hope, in hope believed, so that he became the father of many nations, according to what was spoken, "So shall your descendants be."

19 And not being weak in faith, he did not consider his own body, already dead (since he was about a hundred years old), and the deadness of Sarah's womb.

20 He did not waver at the promise of God through unbelief, but was strengthened in faith, giving glory to God, 21 and being fully convinced that what He had promised He was also able to perform. 22 And therefore "it was accounted to him for righteousness."

23 Now it was not written for his sake alone that it was imputed to him,

24 but also for us. It shall be imputed to us who believe in Him who raised up Jesus our Lord from the dead, 25 who was delivered up because of our offenses, and was raised because of our justification.

# **THE BELIEVER'S BIRTH PLACE**

## ***2.) The believer's place of growing up***

***vv. 24-29***

24 which things are symbolic. For these are the two covenants: the one from Mount Sinai which gives birth to bondage, which is Hagar-- 25 for this Hagar is Mount Sinai in Arabia, and corresponds to Jerusalem which now is, and is in bondage with her children-- 26 but the Jerusalem above is free, which is the mother of us all. 27 For it is written: "Rejoice, O barren, you who do not bear! Break forth and shout, you who are not in labor! For the desolate has

many more children than she who has a husband." 28 Now we, brethren, as Isaac was, are children of promise. 29 But, as he who was born according to the flesh then persecuted him who was born according to the Spirit, even so it is now.

## II.) *Divine Interpretation*

### *The believer's place of growing up*

#### **a.) *It isn't a place of bondage***

**v.24-25**

24 **which things are symbolic.** For these are the two covenants: the one from Mount Sinai which gives birth to bondage, which is Hagar-- 25 for this Hagar is Mount Sinai in Arabia, and corresponds to Jerusalem which now is, and is in bondage with her children--

## **Things Symbolic**

By revelation of the Holy Spirit, Paul introduces to us the mind of God regarding two covenants.

Ishmael's Life is a Symbol of the First Birth  
The life of Flesh, the life of sin...

### ***Divine Interpretation of the Text***

Sarah represents the Abrahamic Covenant

Hagar represents the Mosaic Covenant

#### **Mosaic Covenant**

Is a covenant of human effort – where man continually works at holiness by human goodness!

#### **Abrahamic Covenant**

Is a covenant of sovereign grace – where God stepped in and gave holiness by His Son Jesus Christ!

### ***Verse 25***

for this **Hagar** is **Mount Sinai** in Arabia, and corresponds to **Jerusalem** which now is, and is in bondage with her children--

*for Paul* - the present day Jerusalem, as it is today,  
was a city filled with unbelieving people still held in bondage

2 Corinthians 3:14-17

14 But their minds were blinded. For until this day the same veil remains unlifted in the reading of the Old Testament, because the veil is taken away in Christ. 15 But even to this day, when Moses is read, a veil lies on their heart. 16 Nevertheless when one turns to the Lord, the veil is taken away. 17 Now the Lord is the Spirit; and where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is liberty.

For Hagar is this Mount Sinai in Arabia, which is  
equal to Jerusalem

**(these are focal points of legalistic, human  
efforts of religion)**

### **An Unbelieving Jerusalem is an Offense to God.**

The spiritual descendent of the slave woman are in bondage to the **law**

The spiritual descendent of the free woman are those who live by **grace**

### ***The Earthly City Beneath***

Revelation 11:8

That during the tribulation period the physical bodies of God's **two witnesses will lie in the street of the great city which spiritually is called Sodom and Egypt, where our Lord was crucified.**

A Disobedient Jerusalem makes God Sick

A Disobedient Washington makes God Sick

A Disobedient Moscow makes God Sick

A Disobedient Rome makes God Sick

Hagar, Mount Sinai and Jerusalem are One and the Same - things of Bondage

Sarah is a Type, a Symbol of the Jerusalem Above

## ***The believer's place of growing up***

***b.) It is a place of freedom***

**v.26**

but the Jerusalem above is free, which is the mother of us all.

### **The Jerusalem above is free**

meaning it has no human influence - It is free of sin and evil

Philippians 3:20

For our citizenship is in heaven, from which we also eagerly wait for the Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ,

The Jerusalem Above Is that place where Jesus now is

We who are born again can call the Jerusalem above our mother

Revelation 3:12-13

12 "He who overcomes, I will make him a pillar in the temple of My God, and he shall go out no more. And I will write on him the name of My God and the name of the city of My God, the New Jerusalem, which comes down out of heaven from My God. And I will write on him My new name. 13 "He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches."

### ***The Heavenly City Above***

Revelation 21:1-3

1 Now I saw a new heaven and a new earth, for the first heaven and the first earth had passed away. Also there was no more sea. 2 Then I, John, saw the holy city, New Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband. 3 And I heard a loud voice from heaven saying, "Behold, the tabernacle of God is with men, and He will dwell with them..."

### ***The Heavenly City Above***

Hebrews 12:22-23

But you have come to Mount Zion and to the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem, to an innumerable company of angels, 23 to the general assembly and church of the firstborn who are registered in heaven, to God the Judge of all, to the spirits of just men made perfect,



## ***The Heavenly City Above***

Hebrews 11:9-10

By faith he dwelt in the land of promise as in a foreign country, dwelling in tents with Isaac and Jacob, the heirs with him of the same promise; 10 for he waited for the city which has foundations, whose builder and maker is God.

### ***The believer's place of growing up***

***c.) And it's a place of trouble***

**v.27-29**

For it is written: "Rejoice, O barren, (Sarah) you who do not bear! Break forth and shout, you who are not in labor! For the desolate (Sarah) has many more children than she (Hagar) who has a husband."

**At the end of the tribulation period,**

– Jesus will come to earth and sit upon the throne of David in Jerusalem to establish His earthly rule for 1,000 years – the millennium!

Then the believers will be the majority and righteousness will prevail.

For 14 years Ishmael had been Abraham's only son – until Isaac was born! / And the strife began...

1. In physical birth - Who came First, Ishmael or Isaac?
2. And which is born first, the flesh or the spirit?
3. That's why Jesus said "Ye must be born again – born from above".

**Abraham, His two wives and two sons have great spiritual meaning**

**A Legalistic Religion, a Legalistic Church  
Will always persecute a Work of Grace**

**In Isaac and Ishmael**

There is a grand symbolism that is being lived out in the world  
Back then, Throughout History, and in these Last Days

The Israeli - Palestinian Conflict  
is a spiritual battle over a physical land

## ***The Arab People***

Genesis 16:10-12

10 Then the Angel of the LORD said to Hagar, "I will multiply your descendant exceedingly, so that they shall not be counted because of their multitude." 11 And the Angel of the LORD said to her: "Behold, you are with child, and you shall bear a son. You shall call his name Ishmael, because the LORD has heard your affliction. 12 He shall be a wild man in the earth; his hand shall be violent toward every man, and every man's hand will be violent against him. And he shall live in hostility with all his brethren."

Isn't that exactly what history has shown us?

How the Arab peoples of the world have fought  
among themselves terribly.

Isn't that exactly what is going on in the world today?

How the Arab peoples of the world are fighting  
among themselves to the death.

## **THE BELIEVER'S BIRTH PLACE**

### ***3.) The believer's reality***

***vv. 30-31***

30 Nevertheless what does the Scripture say? "Cast out the bondwoman and her son, for the son of the bondwoman shall not be heir with the son of the freewoman." 31 So then, brethren, we are not children of the bondwoman but of the free.

## ***III.) Personal Application***

### ***a.) The believer shall inherit eternal life***

***v.30***

Nevertheless what does the Scripture say? "Cast out the bondwoman and her son, for the son of the bondwoman shall not be heir with the son of the freewoman."

# **“Cast Out”**

The Hagar & Ishmael's

Is to take a bold stand against legalism and ritual demands.

Cast Out grk 1544 ekballo (ek-bal'-lo);

To literally eject out and away from. To cast forth, to throw out, to reject with all determination.

To shun anything and everything that would require a religious act or performance **that promises acceptance before God.**

## ***Rather, We Inherit Eternal Life Freely***

***b.) The believer shall enjoy everlasting freedom v.31***

So then, brethren, we are not children of the bondwoman - but of the free.

Isaac was a child that could not have been born except through miraculous grace. It was an act of God for Isaac to come into existence, just as it takes every true believer.

Ishmael was a child that came about through natural effort. - It was an act of human planning for Ishmael to come into existence, just as it is every natural man.

**Emphatically Paul declares - that God's stated purpose for all of mankind is that we might be free.**

- And true freedom
- Is the freedom that is experienced within
  - Freedom from the powers of sin
  - Freedom from the powers of guilt
  - Freedom from the powers of evil
  - Freedom from the powers of fear
- Freedom from the powers of this world

## It's no wonder Jesus said

John 8:36

"If the Son therefore makes you free, you shall be free indeed."

John 10:10

"...I have come that they may have life, and that they may have it more abundantly."

### ***c.) The believer shall forever be a child of God***

To be "children of the freewoman" - - Sons and daughters of Abraham,  
means that how we live - will not make sense to the world.

It means that the way we think will differ from how the world thinks.

Our values and goals will be strange to the world.

John 17:13-14

13 "But now I come to You, and these things I speak in the world, that they may have My joy fulfilled in themselves. 14 "I have given them Your word; and the world has hated them because they are not of the world, just as I am not of the world.

## We are Different People Now

Romans 6:16-18

16 Do you not know that to whom you present yourselves slaves to obey, you are that one's slaves whom you obey, whether of sin leading to death, or of obedience leading to righteousness? 17 But God be thanked that though you were slaves of sin, yet you obeyed from the heart that form of doctrine to which you were delivered.

18 And having been set free from sin, you became slaves of righteousness.

Romans 6:22-23

22 But now having been set free from sin, and having become slaves of God, you have your fruit to holiness, and the end, everlasting life. 23 For the wages of sin is death, but the gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord.

# APPLICATIONS

Romans 8:8-17

8 **So then**, those who are in the flesh cannot please God. 9 But you are not in the flesh but in the Spirit, if indeed the Spirit of God dwells in you. Now if anyone does not have the Spirit of Christ, he is not His. 10 And if Christ is in you, the body is dead because of sin, but the Spirit is life because of righteousness. 11 But if the Spirit of Him who raised Jesus from the dead dwells in you, He who raised Christ from the dead will also give life to your mortal bodies through His Spirit who dwells in you. 12 Therefore, brethren, 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 as many as are led by the Spirit of God, these are sons of God. 15 For you did not receive the spirit of bondage again to fear, but you received the Spirit of adoption by whom we cry out, "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 joint heirs with Christ, if indeed we suffer with Him, that we may also be glorified

***a new way to walk, talk, live, and be...***

**is there an Ishmael in your life?**

A child of the past...

1. Is my walk with God a walk or a sprint?
2. Is legalism pressuring my relationship with God?
3. What are the indicators in my life regarding me being like Isaac or Ishmael?