

The Epistle to the Galatians¹

Two Women, Two Covenants, Two Jerusalems, Two Children (Gal.4:21-31)

I While Paul Desires That Christ Would Be Formed in the Saints (Gal.4:19, 21)

- A. To have Christ formed in us, we need to be permeated, saturated, possessed and fully taken over by the Spirit and with the Spirit. This way Christ can make his home in our hearts; no room in us should remain for anyone and anything else but Christ. Not sin, the world, the flesh, Satan, self and, even, the law should occupy us-only Christ. **(Eph.3:17)** Christ must not only occupy us fully in our mind, emotion and will, He should become our mind, emotion and will.
- B. If Christ is not formed in us fully, then our enjoyment of the blessing of the New Testament is not yet full.
- C. In Gal.4:8-20, Paul appeals to the saints in a way of affection, but now He continues his exhortation, arguing if the Galatians care so much for the Law, why don't they listen to it. **(Gal.4:21)**

II Two Women and Two Sons

- A. Paul uses the account of Abraham, Sarah, Isaac, Hagar and Ishmael to illustrate what the real difference between the Law and grace. Isaac was born of Sarah, the free woman according to God's promise through God's power in grace. Ishmael was born of the maidservant according to the fleshly effort of Abraham. **(Gal.4:22-23)**
- B. The two women are an allegory (stated facts are applied to illustrate principles) signifying two covenants. The covenant of grace promised to Abraham, which is related to the New Testament, and the covenant of law related to Moses and is unrelated to the New Testament. **(Gal.4:24)**
 - 1. Hagar represents Mt. Sinai, where the Law was given, and she produces children unto slavery. **(Gal.4:25)** As the concubine and property of Abraham, she could never produce anything other than a child under slavery. The Judaizers, by causing the Galatians to turn to Mt. Sinai were producing children unto slavery.
 - 2. Sarah, like grace, brought forth a son unto the legitimate sonship. The Galatians, like all New Testament believers were born unto sonship, not under law. Therefore they should stand in grace and not fall from it. **(Rom.6:14, 5:2, Gal.5:4)**
- C. Then Paul compares Hagar, not only to Mt. Sinai, but to Jerusalem (of Judea), which should have belonged to the covenant of promise **(1Kings 14:21; Psa.48:2, 8)** as represented by Sarah. In Paul's time that earthly Jerusalem was under the bondage of the Law and, thus, corresponded to Mt. Sinai and to Hagar.

¹ Outline and materials based on the *Life-Study of Galatians* by Witness Lee, Living Stream Ministry, Anaheim, California, May, 1984. Any inaccuracies or errors, in the outline above, are the sole responsibility of the adopter of these materials. - D.M.

- D. Like Sarah, who was a free woman and gave birth to a free son, the Jerusalem above is our mother (**Gal.4:26, Rev.21:1-2**) She gave birth to us and we are born from above. (**John 3:7**)

III Abraham's Descendants and Their Strife

- A. Abraham's spiritual descendants, who belong to the heavenly Jerusalem, to the covenant of promise under freedom are many more than his natural descendants, who belong to the earthly Jerusalem. (**Gal.4:27**) According to **Gen.22:17**, God promised that Abraham's descendants would be like the sand of the seashore and like the stars of heaven. The sands of the seashore signify the earthly descendants of Abraham, i.e., the Jews. The stars, represent, Abraham's heavenly or spiritual descendants, i.e., the believers in Christ. They are according to Isaac, children of promise. (**Gal.4:28**)
- B. The two kinds of children brought forth by the two covenants are different in their natures. One brought forth by the Law are born according to the flesh and those of the promise are born forth according to the Spirit. Those of the flesh have no right to participate in God's promised blessing and those of the Spirit have the full right.
- C. The one born of the flesh (Ishmael) persecuted the one born according to the Spirit (Isaac). It happened then, it happened in the time of Christ's first coming and it is happening today. (**Gal.4:29, Gen. 21:9**)
- D. The way of the flesh, of self-effort and of the Law must be repudiated. For it will have no inheritance with the way according to the Spirit, i.e., with the sons of the free woman. (**Gal.4:30**) Paul declares that he and the Galatian saints are children of the freewoman, which is the same as saying they are sons of Abraham. (**Gal.3:29, 4:31**)

IV God's Desire for Us

- A. God desires to give Himself as a blessing to all mankind. (**Gen.12:3**) Abraham came from the nations, but was drawn out of the fallen race to be the first of the called-out race. He was called by the God of glory, Who promised Abraham a seed that would bring blessing to all people, and a land, signifying Christ as our good land. Once we receive the blessing of the promise, which is the Spirit, we can enter Christ as our all-inclusive land. This Christ is all that God wants for His people. (**Matt.3:17, 17:5**)
- B. Our choice is clear. Either we take Hagar, the earthly Jerusalem and the old covenant or we choose Sarah, the heavenly Jerusalem of the law and the new covenant of promise through grace. If we take the former, we become children according to flesh. If we take the latter, we become the children according to the Spirit.
- C. To be the proper children of the promise, we must lay aside the law, the flesh and slavery and embrace grace, Spirit and liberty in Christ.