

Galatians 4:21-end

Before we study this last section of Chapter 4, we need to remember that we believers are children of God. We have all been adopted into His family through the Blood of Christ. This is so critical, so powerful that it is worth our time to meditate on it. We are not only adopted, we are heirs of God through Christ. How do I know?

Romans 8:15-17 NKJV (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

As His children, we must understand that our adoption means that we no longer must work for the relationship! It is a gift and it is maintained by our love and gratitude towards Him.

So, out with all "doings" that are meant to impress Him or cause Him to accept you! No!!!!!! We must cry out:

Ephesians 1:3-6 NKJV Blessed *be* the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us with every spiritual blessing in the heavenly *places* in Christ, **(4) just as He chose us in Him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before Him in love,** **(5)** having predestined us to adoption as sons by Jesus Christ to Himself, according to the good pleasure of His will, **(6)** to the praise of the glory of His grace, **by which He made us accepted in the Beloved.**

We are His, He is ours! Did He not pray?

John 17:9-11 NKJV "I pray for them. I do not pray for the world but for those whom You have given Me, for they are Yours. **(10)** And all Mine are Yours, and Yours are Mine, and I am glorified in them. **(11)** Now I am no longer in the world, but these are in the world, and I come to You. Holy Father, keep through Your name those whom You have given Me, that they may be one as We *are*."

We that, we can see why Paul was so adamant about Law keeping as a means to God!

(Galatians 4:21 NKJV) Tell me, you who desire to be under the law, do you not hear the law?

Hear the Law => do you know what it says? Do you understand what it says and what it means?

Guess what, there's a lot of people who want to live under the Law. Why?

1. There's a list to follow so you don't have to deal with the Holy Spirit.
2. You follow the list as best as you can and then pat yourself on the back for having kept the rules better than the next guy
3. Then, when you meet Jesus, you can tell him about all the wonderful things you did; You worked hard and deserve salvation!

4. All this to say, if you are under the Law, God will judge you by it; If you are under grace, you will be judged by what Jesus did for you that you could not do for yourself. Dangerous? Yes because the flesh wants to sin all the more so that grace will abound!

Romans 6:1-14 NKJV What shall we say then? Shall we continue in sin that grace may abound? (2) Certainly not! How shall we who died to sin live any longer in it? (3) Or do you not know that as many of us as were baptized into Christ Jesus were baptized into His death? (4) Therefore we were buried with Him through baptism into death, that just as Christ was raised from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life. (5) For if we have been united together in the likeness of His death, certainly we also shall be *in the likeness* of His resurrection, (6) knowing this, that our old man was crucified with Him, that the body of sin might be done away with, that we should no longer be slaves of sin. (7) For he who has died has been freed from sin. (8) Now if we died with Christ, we believe that we shall also live with Him, (9) knowing that Christ, having been raised from the dead, dies no more. Death no longer has dominion over Him. (10) For *the death* that He died, He died to sin once for all; but *the life* that He lives, He lives to God. (11) Likewise you also, reckon yourselves to be dead indeed to sin, but alive to God in Christ Jesus our Lord. (12) Therefore do not let sin reign in your mortal body, that you should obey it in its lusts. (13) And do not present your members *as* instruments of unrighteousness to sin, but present yourselves to God as being alive from the dead, and your members *as* instruments of righteousness to God. (14) For sin shall not have dominion over you, for you are not under law but under grace.

(Galatians 4:22 NKJV) 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, (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**.

Paul is interpreting the story of Hagar and Sarah as an allegory; Some might complain about this type of symbolism but by Jewish standards of interpretation, it is perfectly acceptable. For Rabbis such as Paul, there were many ways to understand the Scriptures, but nearly all of them are based on 4 methods:

1. Peshat is the simple interpretation of the Torah. When the verse says (Genesis 1:1) that "In the beginning G-d created the Heaven and Earth," it means exactly what it seems to mean, in a very literal sense.
2. Remez is the different hints and allusions which are contained within the Torah. One of the methodologies the Torah employs to make these hints is gematria, the numerical value of the letters of the Hebrew alphabet; so one phrase would be compared to another simply based on their numerical values. Weird, but in Jewish thinking, it's ok.
3. Drash expounds upon the deeper meaning of the verse. The Hebrew word for "In the beginning" is bereshit. The midrash tells us that this word can be split into two words—b reshit. The Torah is telling us that the world was created for two ("b") "reshit"s ("firsts")—the Jews and the Torah. Although this is not the simple interpretation of the word, nevertheless it is a valid way of understanding the Torah. Remember, the Jews claim Torah (1st 5 books) as God's revelation to the Jews.
4. Sod (secret) is the esoteric, mystical part of Torah. The Zohar (a book which gives seventy different esoteric explanations for the word bereshit) explains that the word bereshit can

also be split into 2 words: "bara shis" (created [with] six). This is because the world was created through G-d's six emotional powers: kindness, severity, beauty, victory, splendor and foundation.

Other than the direct literal interpretation of Scripture, you have to be careful when doing other methods of interpretation, especially symbolic and the secret esoteric interpretations. I'm not saying they are wrong, I'm just saying, be careful! The interpretation must line up perfectly with Scripture and with how God has revealed Himself to us (that is, His character and attributes).

So, Paul is making a "Drash" (that is, he is expounding on the Scriptures) out of the story of Abraham, Sarah and Hagar. He calls the two sons, Ishmael and Isaac symbols. Ishmael represents the "flesh" because his mother was a bondservant of Sarah and Isaac represents the "promise" because he was promised to Abraham and Sarah who were not in bondage. The "symbols" represent 2 covenants: the Mosaic and the New. Mt. Sinai, says Paul, "gave birth" to bondage but Paul further explains that it corresponds to the Jerusalem that existed in his day. This is the center of the religious adherence, the legalistic bondage to the Law of Moses. The Law puts us on a never-ending treadmill of works to prove our worth to God; The treadmill, powered by pride, exercises the flesh alone;

But, the freewomen gave birth according to the Promise of God and represents the "heavenly" Jerusalem which is free and the "mother" of us all. This covenant reaches down to us because we are incapable to reaching up to God! This covenant has innumerable children who are free; this covenant is powered by the Holy Spirit and wrought by the miracle of the Cross of Christ!

(Galatians 4:27 NKJV) 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."

Isaiah 54:1 NKJV "Sing, O barren, You *who* have not borne! Break forth into singing, and cry aloud, You *who* have not labored with child! For more *are* the children of the desolate Than the children of the married woman," says the LORD.

This covenant has innumerable children who are free; this covenant is powered by the Holy Spirit and wrought by the miracle of the Cross of Christ!

The gist of the prophesy is that there will be many more Believers in the world compared to the Jewish people. Christians rejoice! You who were barren and desolate as in the very beginning before Pentecost, will bear much more than the Jewish Nation!

(Galatians 4:28 NKJV) Now we, brethren, as Isaac *was*, are children of promise.

(Galatians 4:29 NKJV) 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. **(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."

Genesis 21:9 KJV And Sarah saw the son of Hagar the Egyptian, which she had born unto Abraham, mocking.

Ishmael was a teenager (about 14 years old) when Isaac was born; the mocking was probably related to his “apparent” status being the first born of Abraham. Sarah did not appreciate his attitude and confronted Abraham

Genesis 21:10-12 NKJV Therefore she said to Abraham, "Cast out this bondwoman and her son; for the son of this bondwoman shall not be heir with my son, *namely* with Isaac." (11) And the matter was very displeasing in Abraham's sight because of his son. (12) But God said to Abraham, "Do not let it be displeasing in your sight because of the lad or because of your bondwoman. Whatever Sarah has said to you, listen to her voice; **for in Isaac your seed shall be called.**

Some see this as the enmity of the seed of the serpent has towards the seed of the woman. Therefore, we who are children of God will have **difficulty** (persecution) with those “in the world”. But better is persecution than being cast out, being left behind and forsaken by the Father!

(Galatians 4:31 NKJV) So then, brethren, we are not children of the bondwoman but of the free.

And therefore, as children of grace, children of God we have freedom;

How are we free?

We are not under the Law and therefore are free from the curses contained within it. We are free from performance-based behavior towards God.

We are free to access God’s throne of grace in our time of need.

We are free from the fear of death and especially free from the second death (the lake of fire).

We are free to having a strong and living Hope whereby regardless of what occurs in this world, the next will be glorious!

And so much more which we will explore next week as we study the next chapter!