

The Jerusalem Above is Free.

Read Galatians 4:21-22 – Who is Paul referencing in the passage when he talks about a slave and free woman?

- The story Paul is telling begins in Genesis 16 and bookends with the birth of Issac in Genesis 21.
- One born of an Egyptian slave. Her name was Hagar and Abram's son was named Ishmael. It is unclear if this was his first-born son. He had 2 wives at the time Sarah and Keturah. He met Keturah as his wife when he went to the Negev Genesis 12:9. Muslims say Ishmael was the first-born son and the Jews say it was Isaac. There is evidence that it could have been Joktan from Abram's wife Keturah. This is pure speculation by [Alice C. Lindsey](#), but very compelling and interesting considering she is a Christian anthropologist.

Read Galatians 4:23 – One born of flesh and the other born through promise.

- Sarah was 90 when Issac was born, and Abraham was 100. God promised them a son and He delivered on that promise.
- Genesis 16 – Sarai offers her servant Hagar to bear Abram's son. Ishmael was the son of the flesh. Abraham decided not to wait on God but do it himself through a slave. That is what Paul means by "son of the flesh".

Read Galatians 4: 24-27 – Born from the Jerusalem above.

- Paul is using this true story about 2 women to illustrate a point. That is what he means when he uses the word allegory.
 - Paul finds the story to be a good way, a symbolic illustration of grace and works. Paul believes the story of Sarah and Hagar there is no argument between scholars over that, but he wants to use it allegorically to turn the tables on the Judaizers. [“Galatians for You”](#) pg. 123
- The true Israel of God is Jesus the Christ. Earthly, Israel was given a chance to be the light to the world. To be a priestly nation and to bring others back to the one true God. Exodus 19:6. The Israelites could not do this and failed miserably so God sent His son to be the true Israel.
- Paul is comparing two Covenants. Earthly Jerusalem represents the Old Covenant, and the heavenly Jerusalem represents the New Covenant.
- Vs. 27 – Paul cites Isaiah 54:1. “the children of the desolate one will be more than those of the one who has a husband.” Sarah is the mother of the heavenly Jerusalem and we Christians are the spiritual citizens.

Read Galatians 4:28-31 – We are like Isaac.

- Paul is telling the Galatians they are children of promise just as Isaac was. Heir to the spiritual city of Jerusalem. But, just as Isaac was persecuted by Ismael so, the Galatians are being persecuted by the Jews in Galatia.
- So cast them out. Remove them from your midst just as the slave woman was removed. “we are not children of the slave but of the free woman.”

Read Galatians 5:1-4. – We are free.

- Freedom from religion. That is what Christ has done for those who believe. No more guilt about whether we deserve it because of what we do or have not done. Righteousness was granted as a gift to us. [Unmerited grace](#).
- Stand firm and do not submit again to a “yoke of slavery”. Keller draws parallels with political freedom. “It is a well-observed fact that it takes vigilance and responsibility for a nation or group of people to maintain their political independence. Paul says this is just as true with regard to this spiritual freedom.” [“Galatians for You”](#) pg. 132. 1 Corinthians 16:13, Philippians 1:27;4:1.
- With this freedom comes responsibility to live and strive for righteousness. Humility and love for neighbor is a good starting place.

- Vs. 2-3 – Paul is cautioning the Galatians that if they submit to circumcision then all 613 laws come with it. The burden, the guilt, the anxiety of trying to be righteous on their own will overtake them and they will lose the freedom they have in Christ.
- Paul warns them that if they turn to the Law they are severed from Christ and now will be judge by the law. Grace was turned away.
- Those that turn from Christ were never with Him. 1 John 2:19 makes this clear. Christians are saved by grace and continue to show they are Christians by continuing to trust in grace. - [“Galatians for You”](#) pg. 134
 - You cannot lose your salvation. It was a non-refundable gift that God gave you. You did not find Christ, Christ found you. Romans 3:10-12, Ephesians 2:8
 - Christians still need to hear this warning from Paul in verses 2-4 because it is the acid test of whether someone is a Christian or not.

[“Galatians for You”](#) pg. 135

Other Questions to Ask Yourself?

1. Are you living in freedom or are you trying to make you own salvation through works?