

Lessons From Characters In Old Testament
Sarah & Isaac/Hagar & Ishmael
Lesson 10

INTRO:

- A. God made a promise to bring a Savior through Abraham. Genesis 12
 - 1. The problem was Abraham and his wife, Sarah, had no children.
 - 2. In Genesis 16 we read of the ill-conceived plan Sarah has of giving her maidservant, Hagar, to Abraham to bear a child.
 - a. Hagar gives birth to Ishmael.
 - 3. In Genesis 21 God fulfills His promise and Sarah gives birth to Isaac.
 - 4. All this results in numerous problems. (Genesis 16; 21:1-21)
- B. The Holy Spirit has the apostle Paul to use these people and events to make an *"allegory"* (KJV) or to make them *"symbolic"* (NKJV).
 - 1. *"Allegory"* - story in which people, things, and happenings have another meaning.

READ: Galatians 4:21-31

I. HAGAR AND ISHMAEL:

- A. HAGAR:
 - 1. *"Bondwoman"* v. 22
 - 2. Symbolic of a *"Covenant"*:
 - a. *"the one from Mount Sina"* v. 24
 - 1) *"Mount Sinai in Arabia"* v. 25
 - 2) Where God gave the Law to Moses. Exodus 19;20
 - b. *"gives birth to bondage"* v. 24
 - c. *"corresponds to Jerusalem which now is, and is in bondage"* v. 25
 - 1) Jerusalem and Jews were under Roman rule at the time of Paul's writing.
 - 3. *"Cast out the bondwoman"* v. 30
- B. ISHMAEL:
 - 1. Son of a *"bondwoman"*. v. 22
 - 2. *"Born according to the flesh"* v. 23
 - a. Ishmael was born the normal/natural way.
 - 3. *"persecuted him (Isaac) who was born according to the Spirit,"* v. 29
 - 4. *"Cast out...her son (Ishmael),"* v. 30
 - 5. *"The son of the bondwoman shall not be heir with the son of the freewoman"* v. 30

II. SARAH AND ISAAC:

- A. SARAH
 - 1. *"Freewoman"* v. 22
 - 2. Symbolic of a *"Covenant"*:
 - a. *"the Jerusalem above"* v. 26
 - 1) *"is free"* v. 26
 - 2) *"which is the mother of us all."* v. 26
- B. ISAAC
 - 1. Son *"by a freewoman"* v. 22
 - 2. Born *"through promise"* v. 23; *"according to the Spirit"* v. 29
 - a. Though his parents were old and his mother was barren.

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3. Ishmael "*persecuted him who was born according to the Spirit,*" v. 29
4. Shall be "*heir*" v. 30

III. THE MEANING OF THE "ALLEGORY":

- A. Sarah and Hagar, with their sons, represent the two covenants v. 24:
 1. Hagar and Ishmael represent the covenant given at Mt. Sinai - The Law of Moses.
 2. Sarah and Isaac represent the covenant which is The Law of Christ.
- B. We also see described a picture of slaves and freemen:
 1. Ishmael is the son of a slave, but Isaac is freeborn.
 2. The freeborn son - not the slave son - will be the heir.
 3. However, the son born "*according to the flesh*" (Ishmael) will persecute the son born "*according to the Spirit*" (Isaac).
- C. The application is: The Christians at Galatia were sons of the promise, just like Isaac and just like Christians today.
 1. The gospel made them free from sin and death.
 2. They were not slaves, yet they were being tempted to enslave themselves again by putting themselves back under the Law of Moses.

CONCLUSION:

- A. This story of the events surrounding Sarah and Isaac/Hagar and Ishmael were truly symbolic.
 1. In the "*allegory*" which the Holy Spirit gave unto Paul we see the "meaning" of those symbols and the lessons which are being taught.
 2. Paul, in the Galatian letter, makes the application for the Christians at Galatia and for us today.
- B. The Galatians and us today have been redeemed from the Law of Moses. **Galatians 3:13-14**
- C. The Law of Moses served the purpose for which God intended. **Galatians 3:19**
- D. Since that purpose has been served, we are no longer under the Law of Moses. **Galatians 3:25**
- D. We are of the "*seed of Abraham*" and thus heirs because of Christ. **Galatians 3:29**
- E. That occurred when we were "*baptized into Christ*". **Galatians 3:27**
- F. Neither the Galatians nor we can do part of the Law of Moses without becoming a "*debtor*" to do it all. **Galatians 5:3-4**