

Introduction:

- Gal 4:24-31
 - Paul in giving instruction to the Galatians, now draws upon a portion of the Genesis story from which to instruct them. In this setting we find three things right away:
 - First, Abraham had two sons, Ishmael and his younger brother by 14 years Isaac.
 - Second, the two mothers: one was a slave woman and the other was free. The two women stand for the two covenants.
 - Third, the two sons differed. Ishmael was a child of the slave, born according to the flesh or in the course of nature...the ordinary way of procreation. Isaac was born 'through the promise.' That is the promised given to Abraham in Gen 17:19 and 18:10. Therefore Isaac's birth gains significance from the fact of the promise.
 - Paul uses these three things to emphasize the opposition between that which is of the flesh (the ordinary) and that which is of the Spirit (the promise). Therefore you can rely on the flesh for justification or you can rely on the promise through faith!
 - So what we are focused on this morning is the covenant/promise, and the obtaining of the promise through faith. The whole Kingdom of God is received by faith! Faith is a major component of Kingdom living.
- "So Christ has truly set us free. Now make sure that you stay free..."* (Galatians 5:1, NLT)
- The Power of the Gospel is the simplicity in which it is received. God gives a promise. We receive by faith. He manifests the answer! He makes it happen!

I. The Stage Is Set

- A. A covenant is given. God has something that He wants Abram to have and us as well!
 1. A covenant is a promise that is made by words from the stronger to the weaker. Covenant results in inheritance! But one must come to God to receive the inheritance of the covenant. the way we come to God is humbly in faith!
 2. God gives Abraham a covenant. A promise given in words!
 - a) *"So the Lord made a covenant with Abram that day and said, "I have given this land to your descendants, all the way from the border of Egypt to the great Euphrates River—"* (Genesis 15:18, NLT)
 - (1) The covenant contained words of promise.
 - (2) 15:8 How can I be sure that I will possess it? God cuts a covenant with Abraham. Shedding of Blood. Covenants almost always involve the shedding of blood.
 - b) 17:2 I will make a covenant with you...
 - c) 17:4 This is my covenant with you...
 - d) 17:7 I will confirm my covenant with you...
 - (1) The mark of covenant...the shedding of blood in
 - (2) circumcision a sign of the covenant.
 - e) 17:19 I will confirm my covenant with him (Isaac)...
 - f) 17:21 I will confirm my covenant with Isaac...shedding of blood in circumcision.
- B. Two women. Two kids. One promise. Setting the stage for what is being taught to the Galatians.
 1. Ishmael laughs at Isaac. 21:9. Lets look at this.

- a) Isaac - His name means laughter. *Yishaq* - *laugh*. Just to say it makes you smile.
- b) (Qal form of *yishaq* 17:17 Abraham laughed; 18:12, 13, 15 Sarah laughs and God questions her laughing at Him. [2 times]; 21:6 Sarah laughs at Isaacs birth, and says all will laugh with her!) ... [Laughter is part of the new birth! Joy of salvation!]
2. He was being laughed at by Ishmael. That which is of the flesh will always oppose that which is of the Spirit. Ishmael is opposing Isaac. Paul picks up on this in Galatians.
- a) The Piel form of *yishaq* means to make fun of, sarcasm. Ishmael is drawing attention away from Isaac (child of the promise) at a feast that is being given in light of him.
- b) Ishmael is threatening Isaacs freedom and security. IE. Sarah is some stuff in the spirit!
3. Sarah responds vs. 10 Get rid of the slave.
- a) "Get rid of that slave." Heb. *paras* - drive out banish. IE. It is what happened to Adam and Eve Gen. 3:24. IE. It is what happened to Cain Gen. 4:14.
- (1) The verb carries the idea of dismissal from the position of authority. It means to cast out or to dispel.
- (2) Slave woman Heb. *ama* and son of slave woman *ben ama*. Hagar has went from being a 'maid' in chapter 16 to being a slave in 21. Sara is now concerned that the son of slave is now being legally set in position to share in the inheritance. She wants him banished! And God agrees with her...based on the promise...based on the covenant.
- b) Isaac gets the inheritance! He is the Child of the promise.
- (1) *yaras* - inherit. "In Israel's history the root takes on its double force, to inherit and to dispossess, in relationship to the covenant." Hartley, J. E. (1999). ירש 920. R. L. Harris, G. L. Archer Jr., & B. K. Waltke (Eds.), *Theological Wordbook of the Old Testament* (electronic ed., p. 409). Chicago: Moody Press.
- (2) In salvation we inherit or take possession and also dispossess death in **covenant** with God. **Covenant results in inheritance**. But one must come to receive the inheritance. (Ps 37:9,11,22, 39)
- (a) Kelly and my scripture when we were married was Ps 37
- (b) (Ps 37:9,11,22, 39) notice: the land! The land was Isaacs inheritance along with all the other promises to the people of the Promise.
4. God's thoughts:
- a) It is interesting that every time God refers to Ishmael he calls him a *lad* (*na'ar*; cf. vv. 12, 17 [2 times], 18, 20)." NICOT Genesis
- b) But when Abraham or Hagar refer to him they call him a *child* (*yeled*; cf. vv. 14, 15, 16). This word denotes a biological relationship. The use of the former word by God minimizes Ishmael's relationship to Abraham as son.
- c) Thus Ishmael is a *yeled/child* to Abraham and Hagar, but he is a *na'ar /lad* to God. It is almost as if God is siding with Sarah in calling Ishmael Abraham's *na'ar/boy* rather than his *yeled/child*.
- d) "One could call vs. 12f. the 'tense moment' in the structure of the narrative, for the reader has not expected that God would be on Sarah's side, but rather on Abraham's." NICOT Gen.
- e) Note also that God uses the same term for Hagar (*'āmâ*) slave as Sarah did (v. 10). Hamilton, V. P. (1995). The Book of Genesis, Chapters 18-50 (p. 81). Grand Rapids, MI: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co.

II. God's Leadership In Abrahams Life

- A. Abraham is being led by God...directed by God. Remember the Holy Spirit teachings on being led/directed. Connection is required.
1. He leaves the place of familiarity and sets out to place he has never been before. He has not seen it. Does not know where it is at. And has no idea how he will get there or get the land.
 2. He is being led by God.
 - a) God always leads us out of the place of familiarity! What you are most familiar with will keep you from obtaining what God is most familiar with. It requires faith to go to a place you have never seen and never been. You have to trust in order to receive what can't possibly be given in the natural. It is a divine 'set up!' for Abraham. It is a personal mentorship of God in Abrahams life! He can't help but grow following God's leading!
- B. Abraham is being led by promises. Abraham is being led by promises from a God who has and will continue to supernaturally show up. So kind of God to do that with us.
1. Gen. 12:1 *Leave your native country.* Gen. 12:2 *I will make you a great nation. I will bless you, make you famous and bless others through you!* vs. 4 so Abraham departed. He is being led by promises.
 2. Gen 12:7 God appears to him. This is supernatural. God continues to lead with a promise. *I will give you this land.*
 3. Gen 15:1. Abraham has a vision! *"Do not be afraid I will protect you!" "Your servant will not be your heir!"* Look at the stars Abram! Look at the sand! vs7 God reminds Abram of the promises. 15:8 How? Answered by covenant! Shedding of blood.
- C. Abraham acquires the promises by faith! Abraham is being led by promises/covenant. But he must exercise faith to acquisition the promises.
1. *"And Abram believed the Lord, and the Lord counted him as righteous because of his faith."* (Genesis 15:6, NLT)
 2. Bob Jones Prophesied to us, *"I see the faith of Abraham in this house. You are climbing Jacobs ladder. Just keep reaching up and take the next rung. If you keep looking up you won't backslide."*
 3. His faith is what made him the "Father of many nations." IE. Sarah helped by reminding him of the covenant/the promise that was given.
 4. We must note that Abram was counted as righteous before he was circumcised! It was not by works but faith that he received that!

III. God's Leadership In Our Lives

- A. We are being led/directed by God.
1. This was Paul's Galatians argument: get rid of that slave mentality trying to obtain favor from good works. Gal. 4:3-7 We are sons of God! Not mere children/
 2. There is nothing like His leadership in our lives. Encounters, visitations, visions, dreams, etc. all for the purpose of taking us deeper into Him and into His plans for us.
 3. You have to be connected to be led. IE. the engine can't lead the train if it is not connected.

4. What is not of God persecutes what is of God. Hell does not want you led by God not understanding and grasping His word.
- B. The promises lead us.
 1. The Word of God lets us know what we can trust Him for.
 - a) I started with salvation.
 - b) Got healed a few months later.
 - c) Experienced miracles, angels, and powerful times with God.
 2. "Faith begins where the will of God is known." FF Bosworth, Christ the Healer.
 3. "The power of God can be claimed where the will of God is known." Bosworth.
- C. We obtain these promises by faith!
 1. *"What's more, the Scriptures looked forward to this time when God would make the Gentiles right in his sight because of their faith. **God proclaimed this good news** to Abraham long ago when he said, "All nations will be blessed through you." (Galatians 3:8, NLT)*
 2. *"But the Scriptures declare that we are all prisoners of sin, so **we receive** God's promise of freedom only **by believing** in Jesus Christ." (Galatians 3:22, NLT)22-25*
 - a) We receive by believing!
 - b) You can't earn this.
 - c) Heb 11:6 "Without faith it is impossible to please Him."
 3. *"For the Scriptures tell us, Abraham believed God, and God counted him as righteous because of his faith." When people work, their wages are not a gift, but something they have earned. But people are counted as righteous, not because of their work, but because of their faith in God who forgives sinners." (Romans 4:3-5, NLT)*

Conclusion:

- The simplicity of the Gospel is this:
 - A promised is given.
 - Faith is exercised.
 - The reward is obtained! Salvation, healing, deliverance...
- When Israel became a nation, they had to respond in faith by driving out all the former inhabitants. As Christians we are called to take possession of the promises of the Kingdom by driving out all former tenants of doubt and unbelief. They were given the land but had to respond in faith to obtain the promise.