

# The WildBranch Ministry

*...thou bearest not the root, but the root  
thee. Romans 11:18*

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## Frequently Asked Questions

### Galatians 4:21 - 31: The Allegory of Hagar and Sarah

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Frequently I am asked about the meaning of this section of scripture. I am told that this allegory definitively shows that Torah is bondage, and is not only to be set aside, but is to be cast out, and those of us who desire to follow the Torah of YHVH are the children of Hagar. But is that the background of what Sha'ul is teaching?

The first four and a half chapters of this book have been teaching us that redemption and sonship are not acquired by obedience to Torah, or any law, for that matter. The focus on inheritance, the seed, and relationship precedes the allegory of Hagar and Sarah. Man is saved by grace through faith, and it is this gift from YHVH that establishes the relationship. Inheritance, i.e. the promise, can only be obtained through relationship. There is one question I wish for you to keep in mind as we study these passages and that is, 'When did relationship begin?'

Galatians 4:21 - 23

*"Tell me, ye that desire to be under the law, do ye not hear the law? For it is written that Avraham had two sons, the one by a bondmaid, the other by a freewoman. But he who was of the bondwoman was born after the flesh; but he of the freewoman was by promise;"*

I think that one of two key verses is verse 21. Who are those who desire to be under the law?, and, is the desire to obey Torah the same thing as being 'under the law'? This might be one of those occasions where it would behoove us to combine our next study with this one, because the 6th chapter of Romans defines for us what it means to be under the law. Suffice it to say for now, however, that to be 'under the law' means to be 'under the dominion of sin', which is called the 'old man' in Romans 6:6. Those who desire to be under the law, Torah or otherwise, are attempting to establish righteousness without trust and relationship. They are doing it on the basis of obedience to Torah alone. As we will see, the covenant at Mt. Sinai cannot stand alone, because the covenant of Sinai cannot save man or atone for him. Sh'aul tells those who desire to be under the law that their inability to be heirs of the promise by obedience to the law is actually written in the law. He shows this by the use of allegory. He begins by using two very familiar women, and one man, from scripture: Hagar, Sarah, and Avraham. It is imperative to know the story of

these three, for it is their actions that form the basis for the comparison. The story, found in B'reshith Chapters 16 through 21, tells of a promise by YHVH to Avraham and Sarah that they would bear a child, even in their old age, that would carry the seed of the woman, that the everlasting covenant would go through him, and that his seed would produce a multitude of nations. Avraham and Sarah were already of the seed of the woman through the same eternal covenant of faith. More about this later. As time went on, Avraham and Sarah began to lose their trust in YHVH's words and soon took it upon themselves to establish this promise by their own works and by their own ways. Avraham, in a scene similar to Adam in the garden, listens to his wife, does not trust YHVH and produces a child, Ishmael, by means of a maid named Hagar. This son, because he was produced by works rather than trust, could not be Avraham's heir, because he was not produced by relationship through trust, or by faith. The seed of faith was through Yitz'chak because his birth was the result of Avraham and Sarah's trust in their 'Father' YHVH, and so children of faith are produced by children of faith. Inheritance is not earned, but acquired by birth and given by promise.

Galatians 4:24 - 26

*"Which things are an allegory; for these are the two covenants; the one from the Mount Sinai, bearing children for bondage. who is Hagar. For this Hagar is Mount Sinai in Arabia, and answereth to Jerusalem which now is, and is in bondage with her children. But Jerusalem which is above is free, which is the mother of us all."*

The difference between Hagar and Sarah is the basis for the two covenants. The covenant at Mount Sinai is clearly referring to the Law of Mosheh. The covenant referred to here is given in Sh'mot 19:5.

*"Now, therefore, if ye will obey my voice indeed, and keep my covenant, then ye shall be a peculiar treasure unto me above all people; for all the earth is mine."*

The covenant begins with the words *v<sup>e</sup>'atah*. This word means 'henceforth' or 'from this point on'. It follows the proclamation from YHVH that the children of Israel, through their trust in the relationship established by the Passover, are now born on eagles' wings and brought into YHVH himself. If you carefully read the covenant given on the mount you will see that there is no salvation or redemption found here, but only a promise that the children of Israel will be treasured above all other people on the earth as a result of obedience. If the covenantal relationship of trust is established first, then obedience to Torah, given on Mount Sinai, will distinguish you from all other peoples. If the Law of Mosheh is sought after without the relationship, then the natural result is bondage, because one is seeking righteousness outside of relationship. And it is not because Torah itself is bondage, but because we fail to keep Torah. TORAH DID NOT DELIVER ISRAEL FROM EGYPT! Torah

was given after they were delivered, and after the relationship built upon trust was established. This same pattern is introduced from the beginning. Adam is created as a 'son of 'Elohiym' and then given rules. Noach found 'grace' in the sight of YHVH and then given instructions to build an ark. Avraham 'believed' in YHVH and then was given the covenant of circumcision. Very simply, the covenant in Sh'mot 19:5 is a promise that Israel's obedience to the voice of YHVH will separate them from all other peoples of the world, period! Works of the law, standing alone, cannot deliver. If the covenant on this Mount is depended on to redeem you, which it is not designed to do, then you are in bondage, for you cannot satisfy it.

The first mistake concerning this section of scripture is to wrongly assume that the covenant on Mount Sinai was YHVH's way of 'saving' Israel. The second mistake is found in assuming that the other covenant is the 'New Covenant'. This is a very tragic blunder, for there is no reference to the 'New Covenant' at all. There is also no reference to the New Testament, either. The comparison Sha'ul is teaching is between the bondmaid and the freewoman. A promise was made to Avraham and Sarah that if they listened to the Word of YHVH they would produce a child whose seed would become a multitude of nations. This promise was made AFTER Avraham and his wife 'believed' unto righteousness. Avraham and Sarah had already established a relationship based upon faith with YHVH. One relationship was based upon trust, and the other was not. Notice in Galatians 4:25 that another comparison is drawn into the allegory. Hagar and Mount Sinai are synonymous to the Jerusalem that NOW IS. A cursory reading of the gospels will reveal that the Jerusalem of Yahshua's time was dominated by the Pharisees and Sadducees: two 'Jewish' sects that represented the very essence of what Mount Sinai without relationship produces. The basis for being a citizen of the 'kingdom of heaven' was no longer rooted in the redeeming blood of the sacrifice, but rather strict adherence to the 'rabbinical' view of Torah.

In verse 26, we are given more information. The second of the two covenants is compared to the Jerusalem from above, the mother of us all? What is the Jerusalem from above, the mother of us all? We get some more information in Ivrim 12:22-23.

*"But ye are come unto Mount Zion, and unto the city of the living 'Elohiym, the HEAVENLY JERUSALEM, and to an innumerable company of angels, to the general assembly and church of the first-born, having been written in heaven, and to 'Elohiym, the Judge of all, and to the spirits of just men made perfect. . ."*

This Jerusalem from above is a place that the writer's audience has now COME UNTO and is part of. This fits perfectly with Ephesians 2:19-22, where we are told that Gentile believers have now become part of something that has already existed. This Jerusalem

from above is the 'mother' of us all. This, in context, would be referring to the 'mother' of all who believe. Sha'ul is telling us that Sarah, the one who was of Israel by faith and trust, represents a covenant that predates Mount Sinai and is from above. I believe that this 'mother' is a reference to the woman of the 'seed of the woman' in B'reshith 3:15. The seed, as defined by Yahshua, is the Word of YHVH, and Chavah (Eve) represents all who bear that seed. This is the seed of faith, a seed planted by faith, that makes one a child of YHVH. The 'seed of the woman' was given from the beginning and we know from Galatians 3:16, of this same book, that there is and always has been only ONE SEED. It is the seed that establishes the Father/Son relationship, which now makes inheritance possible. The seed cannot be received by works, but by trust, followed by obedience to Torah as evidence of that trust. Why this is so difficult for most 'Christians' to see is baffling.

I believe the covenant from above was established from the beginning, and has always been YHVH's gift to man. It was always initiated by trust in the giver. Torah is a covenant that is preceded by this trust, and was never designed to replace that simple trust. If relationship is sought through Mount Sinai, then the Passover was in vain. First Passover, THEN Mount Sinai. The allegory that Sha'ul uses here fits perfectly into the theme of this whole book. Redemption and relationship are found in faith in YHVH alone, and has always been the commencement of a life devoted to Him. Sha'ul is not betraying the context of Galatians with this allegory. The focus is redemption. If you mingle the covenant at Mount Sinai with trust in order to obtain redemption then you are still cursed. With respect to redemption, they must be separated, they cannot co-exist. The nature of an allegory is to keep the allegory in it's allegorical context.

Shalom Alecheim!

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