

BOOK OF GALATIANS

"The Free Woman"

Scripture Reading: GALATIANS 4:21-31

-) **SLIDES 1-6**. Bible Jeopardy!
-) **SLIDES 7-10**. Read today's Scripture text.
-) **SLIDE 11**. Today we continue in our expository study of the Book of GALATIANS. This is message #32. I have titled today's message "*The Free Woman*" (v22).
-) There are many people today who know very little or do not want to know about history. There are many people today who want to eliminate history. And there are many people today who want to rewrite history.
-) There are some who want to forget about the past and how we got to where we are today. And then there are some who want to put a different spin on history to be politically correct and not hurt anyone's feelings. And then there's this other group who want to blame people today for what somebody's ancestors did hundreds of years ago.
-) We may not be proud of certain historical events in American history. But what happened, happened. No one can change that. We must learn from that. And we cannot change our own personal history either. But I hope we can all learn from our own successes and failures and those of others.
-) Likewise, in the church, there are many Christians who want to dismiss the OT. They say it has no relevance to us NT people today. In their favor I will agree we are not under the Mosaic Law and we are NT people under the covenant of grace. Jesus has become our sacrifice of atonement. And personally, I would rather prefer to preach from the NT than the OT.

-) But, as Christians, we cannot eliminate the OT and not speak about it as if it never happened. The OT, beginning with GENESIS chapter 12, is the history of God's chosen people and His plan of redemption. It's the history of those people called the Hebrews, the Israelites, the Jews.
-) The bottom-line question Paul is proposing to the Galatians in these eleven verses is this: "*Do you want to be free or a slave?*" One brings eternal life (free) and the other eternal damnation (slave). Who do you want to follow, Galatians? Jesus, who brings freedom or the Law which brings slavery?
-) To make his point, the apostle Paul gives the people of Galatia a history lesson—a lesson of how the Jewish nation began. Why? 1) Because there are valuable learning lessons in knowing this history. 2) Because it is something they need to remember and understand about faith and promises.
-) The History Guy. "*Because history needs to be remembered.*"
-) This morning we are going to look at this history lesson Paul is teaching to the Galatians. And perhaps we too will learn a little something about faith and promises and some Biblical history.
-) **SLIDE 12**. He begins by giving them the choice. Free or slave. And in these eleven verses he will be making four historical comparisons to these choices. Review this history.
-) **SLIDE 13** GENESIS 15:2-4. God made a promise to Abraham that he would be the father of a great nation (Israel). And the heir of this promise would be fathered (physically) by Abraham. However, this may be a little difficult because both Abraham and his wife Sarah are beyond child-bearing years.
-) **SLIDE 14**. GENESIS 16:1-4a. Instead of relying on the sovereignty and promise of God, Sarah decides to make this happen her way to a very complying Abraham. And we know that this woman, Hagar, has a child and his name is Ishmael. Abraham was 86 years old when Ishmael was born.

-) **SLIDE 15**. GENESIS 18:9-14. But this promise would only be through one woman. And that woman would be Sarah.
-) **SLIDE 16**. GENESIS 21:1-3. Sarah does conceive and has a son who they name Isaac. God's promise has been fulfilled.
-) This is the history of the birth of the nation of Israel. It begins with Abraham as being chosen by God. He will be the father of a great nation (Israel – God's chosen people). And then the promise begins from there. And the path of salvation will flow from there. The cry of freedom will be found there.
-) So, now that we know this history, let's look at four points the apostle Paul makes in our Scripture text today and place them in the correct category. And what Paul is saying is that their salvation rests upon which one of these two paths one decides to take. One may choose the path of freedom or choose the path of slavery.
-) **SLIDE 17**. GALATIANS 4:22. So the comparison Paul is making with the path of salvation is between a free woman and the bondwoman (slave).
-) **SLIDE 18**. So, let's place those two names in their proper category. Sarah represents freedom while Hagar represents the bondwoman (slavery).
-) **SLIDE 19**. GALATIANS 4:22. The next comparison Paul is making with the path of salvation is between the sons of these two women.
-) **SLIDE 20**. So, let's place those two names in their proper category. Isaac represents freedom while Ishmael represents slavery.
-) **SLIDE 21**. GALATIANS 4:23. The next comparison Paul is making with the path of salvation is between how these two women conceived their sons.

-) **SLIDE 22.** So, let's place those two words in their proper category. The promise represents freedom while the flesh represents slavery. I hope we can understand the importance of these two words and the point Paul is making here.
-) The promise is by faith and the flesh is by works. Sarah believed the promise made by God could never be fulfilled through her. She was too old. So, she manipulated a child to be born in her attempt to fulfill the promise on her terms.
-) So, Ishmael was a child born by the flesh, by a work of Sarah instead of born by the promise of God.
-) Likewise, in salvation, it is by faith we believe the promises of God concerning the finished work of Jesus Christ. On the other side of that coin, it is by our good works and our obedience to the Law that we falsely believe that we will inherit eternal life. And we know that this entire letter is about being justified by faith and faith alone and not by works.
-) **SLIDE 23.** GALATIANS 4:25-26. The final comparison Paul makes with the path of salvation is between what physical place represents these two women.
-) **SLIDE 24.** Where do these two words go? The Jerusalem from above is freedom while Mt. Sinai is slavery.
-) Again, I hope we can see the significance in this point Paul is making. The Jerusalem from above will be the new Jerusalem coming down out of heaven when there is a new heaven and a new earth. And by faith it will be the place where all believers will enjoy eternity.
-) The other is Mt. Sinai (the present Jerusalem which is under bondage of the Law). What happened at Mt. Sinai? That's where God gave Moses the Law. And we know what about the Law? The Law never saved anyone. The Law could only kill. The Law could only make one realize they come up short because one cannot obey and keep the entire Law.

-) **SLIDE 25.** Another point I'd like to make here for historical value. Mt. Sinai is in Arabia which is the covenant of the flesh which are all the descendants of Ishmael. And that's why today the descendants of Ishmael are called Arabs. Jews are the descendants of Isaac and Arabs are the descendants of Ismael.
-) So, there's our Bible history lesson for today as presented by the apostle Paul to the people in the churches at Galatia. Because history needs to be remembered.
-) **SLIDE 26.** Which path have you chosen? The path of slavery where you will determine your own path of salvation, like Sarah determined how God's promise needs to be accomplished, or the path of freedom where you believe and trust in the promises of God?
-) Tomorrow, here in the USA, we celebrate those who have given their lives for the freedom of the people in this great country. We appreciate their sacrifice.
-) But let's not take one day but every day to celebrate the One who sacrificed His life for the spiritual freedom we have. And His name is Jesus Christ. Amen!

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