

*Hagar and Sarah versus Jabberwocky*  
**Galatians 4:21–31 (Galatians at a Gallup)**

Grace Chapel

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**INTRODUCTION**

**Jabberwocky**

‘Twas brillig, and the slithy toves,

Did gyre and gimble in the wabe:

All mimsy were the borogoves,

And the mome raths outgrabe.

**REVIEW (Galatians 1:1–4:20)**

1. Amazingly, amateur legalists pulled Galatians from the grace gospel revealed to Paul (a former legalist). Thus, Paul did not learn the gospel from men, not even from the apostles (ch. 1). Instead, the great heroes to the legalists (Peter, James, & John) see Paul as an equal, with Peter even accepting Paul’s rebuke for shunning Gentiles (ch. 2). Though divine signs persuaded these believers about Christ & they received the Spirit [as a seal], legalists tricked them that the Law was also needed; but all law-keepers are under a death-curse, which death curse Christ removed from all believers & gave life (3:1–14). God unilaterally confirmed the Covenant to Abraham & his [linear] Seed, so it cannot be altered, but God temporarily added the Law to display sin as sin until Christ made believers alive, (specifically) faith in Christ rendered the Galatian believers God’s children (blessed through the Abrahamic Covenant), rendering all racial, gender, or life-station distinctions secondary (3:15–29) Israel lacked authority as a minor heir under the Law as a babysitter (despite promises that it will be the world’s key nation), until Christ redeemed both Jews & Gentiles, making all believers sons & heirs (4:1–7), but (unlike Israel) the Galatians were once pagan polytheists, but now as believers who have known God, enslavement to human rules risks loss of reward (4:8–11), so they should resume mutual fellowship with Paul, (4:12–15), who labors again for these whose wandering and animosity distresses him (4:16–20).

***A. Gentiles who want to be under the Law should recognize that Genesis shows that being a son of Abraham does not automatically confer freedom (4:21–23)***

**A1. Gentiles who want to be under the Law do not understand the Law (4:21)**

Here, Law = the books of Moses: Genesis, Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers, Deuteronomy

The first book of the Law (Genesis) contains the records about Abraham.

Genesis discusses Israel’s history before God gave the Law system

The other four books deal with the time when Israel received its Law system

**A2. Gentiles wanting to be under the Law need to see that Abe’s son by a bondwoman was according to the flesh; the one by a freewoman was thru promise (4:22–23)**

**B. The two women illustrate two covenants: A covenant of slavery and a covenant of freedom, the latter of which will triumph over the former (4:24–27)**

**B1. An allegory (in following verses) illustrates Paul's point (4:24a) An extended metaphor**

**Does the use of an allegory deny the historicity of Old Testament accounts? No!**

**Is the use of an allegory an admission that Paul lacks *real* proof? No!**

**Does this passage endorse allegorical interpretation in general? No!**

**Did Paul's analogy (below) twist the evidence (as some commentators contend)? No!**

Ishmael, a bondwoman's son ≈ 1. Jewish unbels enslaved by flesh to the Law

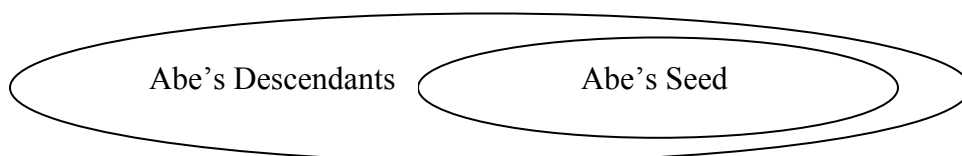
Isaac, a freewoman's son ≈ 2. Church Age believers who are free by promise

Some say Paul misused Genesis: that Ishmael should stand for \_\_\_\_\_

and they say that Isaac should stand for \_\_\_\_\_

Such commentators say that Paul was unpersuasive

**Actually, Paul's argument is true & powerful, if one catches some key details  
Not all descendants of Abraham are his seed**



Ishmael was Abraham's descendant, but was not Abraham's seed

Esau was Abraham's descendant, but was not Abraham's seed

Unbelieving Israel was Abraham's descendant, but not Abraham's seed

Isaac was Abraham's descendant and also Abraham's seed

Jacob was Abraham's descendant and also Abraham's seed

The Universal Church is Abraham's descendant and also Abraham's seed  
(cf. Galatians 3:29)

Paul compares (1) seed to seed and (2) non-seed to non-seed:

1. Neither Ishmael nor legalistic Israeli unbels are seed (but are descendants)
2. Both Isaac and the universal church are seed of Abraham

Paul's analogy is quite legitimate and carries the argument of Galatians further

**B2. Hagar represents the first of two covenants (the Law covenant) given at Mt. Sinai, which only gives birth to bondservants, corresponding to the present Jerusalem, whose residents are in bondage (4:24b–25)**

These verse also use metaphors. The word is = represents.

These<sub>feminine</sub> [women] are (= represent) two covenants (verse 24b)

This Hagar is (= represents) Mount Sinai

Paul identifies Mount Sinai as being in Arabia, not on the Sinai peninsula.  
I believe that *Jebel el Lawz* (in western Saudi Arabia) is Mt. Sinai.

Mount Sinai corresponds to (represents) the present Jerusalem

**B3. [In contrast with the present Jerusalem) the heavenly Jerusalem (which will be home to the Church) is free (4:26)**

Isaiah 52:7–10 contrasts the present Jerusalem with the Millennial Jerusalem on earth

In contrast with Jerusalem of Isaiah's day, millennial Jerusalem will be glorious  
Millennial Jerusalem will be home for redeemed Israel

Galatians 4:25–26 contrasts the present Jerusalem with the heavenly Jerusalem

The Jerusalem above is far more glorious than earthly Jerusalem of Paul's day.  
It will be home for the Church.

Paul extends Isaiah's contrast between present Jerusalem and another Jerusalem in a way appropriate for the Church

**B4. The formerly barren eventually has a multitude [of seed], greater than the number of descendants produced by the one with a head start (4:27)**

From Isaac until Christ, there was one seed in each generation.

After Christ, every Church Age believer is seed of Abraham (the father of many nations)

Likewise, after Christ (during the Tribulation and Millennium) the seed will multiply

*C. (Like Isaac) Church Age believers are children of promise who are persecuted by children of the flesh until the children of the flesh are expelled (4:28–31)*

**C1. Church Age believers are [seed, that is] children of promise, like Isaac (4:28)**

**C2. Non-seed have always persecuted the seed [as Ishmael persecuted Isaac] (4:29)**

**C3. Scripture affirms that it was right to protect Isaac's inheritance by expelling Ishmael (4:30)**

**C4. The Galatian believers should regard themselves as seed and should separate from those who persecute the seed (4:31)**

**Conclusion and Application**