

A Tale of Two Sons
Galatians 4



Gal. 4:8-9

“8 Formerly, when you did not know God, you were slaves to those who by nature are not gods.

9 But now that you know God—or rather are known by God—how is it that you are turning back to those weak and miserable forces? Do you wish to be enslaved by them all over again?”

A Tale of Two Sons

- **The Divine Promise**
- **The allegory**
- **Children of the slave woman**
- **Children of the free woman**
- **The key to victory**

A Tale of Two Sons

- I. The Divine Promise
 - A. Our previous state

Gal 4:1-3

“1 What I am saying is that as long as an heir is underage, he is no different from a slave, although he owns the whole estate.

2 The heir is subject to guardians and trustees until the time set by his father.

3 So also, when we were underage, we were in slavery under the elemental spiritual forces of the world.”

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- I. The Divine Promise
 - A. Our previous state
 - 1. They were like slaves

"A Roman child became an adult at the sacred family festival known as the liberalia, held annually on the seventeenth of March. At this time the child was formally adopted by the father as his acknowledged son and heir and received the toga virilis in place of the toga praetexta which he had previously worn." (Boice)

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- I. The Divine Promise
 - A. Our previous state
 - 1. They were like slaves

Gal 3:24-25

“24 So the law was our guardian until Christ came that we might be justified by faith.
25 Now that this faith has come, we are no longer under a guardian.”

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I. The Divine Promise

A. Our previous state

2. Under slavery to the elemental forces

Stoicheion - any first thing, from which the others belonging to some series or composite whole take their rise, an element, first principal

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Col 2:20

“Since you died with Christ to the elemental spiritual forces of this world, why, as though you still belonged to the world, do you submit to its rules?”

Gal 3:19

“Why, then, was the law given at all? It was added because of transgressions until the Seed to whom the promise referred had come. The law was given through angels and entrusted to a mediator.”

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I. The Divine Promise

B. Our adoption

Gal 4:4-6

“4 But when the set time had fully come, God sent his Son, born of a woman, born under the law,

5 to redeem those under the law, that we might receive adoption to sonship.

6 Because you are his sons, God sent the Spirit of his Son into our hearts, the Spirit who calls out, “Abba, Father.”

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- I. The Divine Promise
 - B. Our adoption

Gal 4:7

“So you are no longer a slave, but God’s child; and since you are his child, God has made you also an heir.”

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1 Peter 1:3-5

“3 Praise be to the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ! In his great mercy he has given us new birth into a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, 4 and into an inheritance that can never perish, spoil or fade. This inheritance is kept in heaven for you, 5 who through faith are shielded by God’s power until the coming of the salvation that is ready to be revealed in the last time.”

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II. The Allegory

Gal 4:21-24a

“21 Tell me, you who want to be under the law, are you not aware of what the law says?

22 For it is written that Abraham had two sons, one by the slave woman and the other by the free woman.

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II. The Allegory

Gal 4:21-24a *(cont'd)*

23 His son by the slave woman was born according to the flesh, but his son by the free woman was born as the result of a divine promise.

24 These things are being taken figuratively:"

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II. The Allegory

A. The story of Abraham's sons

Gen 15:4

“He (God) took him (Abraham) outside and said, ‘Look up at the sky and count the stars—if indeed you can count them.’ Then he said to him, ‘So shall your offspring be.’”

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II. The Allegory

A. The story of Abraham's sons

Gen 17:7

“I will establish my covenant as an everlasting covenant between me and you and your descendants after you for the generations to come, to be your God and the God of your descendants after you.”

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II. The Allegory

A. The story of Abraham's sons

Gen 17:20-21

“20 ‘And as for Ishmael, I have heard you: I will surely bless him; I will make him fruitful and will greatly increase his numbers. He will be the father of twelve rulers, and I will make him into a great nation.

21 But my covenant I will establish with Isaac, whom Sarah will bear to you by this time next year.’”

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Gen 21:8-12

“8 The child grew and was weaned, and on the day Isaac was weaned Abraham held a great feast.

9 But Sarah saw that the son whom Hagar the Egyptian had borne to Abraham was mocking,

10 and she said to Abraham, ‘Get rid of that slave woman and her son, for that woman’s son will never share in the inheritance with my son Isaac.’

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Gen 21:8-12 (cont'd)

11 The matter distressed Abraham greatly because it concerned his son.

12 But God said to him, 'Do not be so distressed about the boy and your slave woman. Listen to whatever Sarah tells you, because it is through Isaac that your offspring will be reckoned.'"

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II. The Allegory

B. The two covenants

Gal 4:24b

“The women represent two covenants.”

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Gen 12:1-3

“1 The LORD had said to Abram, ‘Go from your country, your people and your father’s household to the land I will show you.

2 I will make you into a great nation, and I will bless you; I will make your name great, and you will be a blessing.

3 I will bless those who bless you, and whoever curses you I will curse; and all peoples on earth will be blessed through you.’”

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III. Children of the Slave Woman

Gal 4:24c-25

“24c One covenant is from Mount Sinai and bears children who are to be slaves: This is Hagar.

25 Now Hagar stands for Mount Sinai in Arabia and corresponds to the present city of Jerusalem, because she is in slavery with her children.”

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IV. Children of the Free Woman

A. To whom is the promise made?

Gal 4:26

“But the Jerusalem that is above is free, and she is our mother.”

Gal 3:16

“The promises were spoken to Abraham and to his seed. Scripture does not say ‘and to seeds,’ meaning many people, but ‘and to your seed,’ meaning one person, who is Christ.”

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Gal 4:27

“For it is written: ‘Be glad, barren woman, you who never bore a child; shout for joy and cry aloud, you who were never in labor; because more are the children of the desolate woman than of her who has a husband.’”

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IV. Children of the Free Woman

B. The flesh and the Spirit cannot coexist

Gal 4:28-29

“28 Now you, brothers and sisters, like Isaac, are children of promise.

29 At that time, the son born according to the flesh persecuted the son born by the power of the Spirit. It is the same now. 30 But what does Scripture say? ‘Get rid of the slave woman and her son, for the slave woman’s son will never share in the inheritance with the free woman’s son.’”

A Tale of Two Sons

- Eternal life
- Delivery from sin and addictions
- A plan and purpose for our lives
- Peace in life (marriage, family, relationships)
- Peace of mind
- Rest when we are weary
- Strength when we are weak
- Freedom from fear
- Forgiveness
- To supply all our needs
- The filling of the Holy Spirit
- That all things will work out for good
- Nothing can separate from the love of God

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Rom 8:5

“Those who live according to the flesh have their minds set on what the flesh desires; but those who live in accordance with the Spirit have their minds set on what the Spirit desires.”

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Gal 5:16-18

“16 So I say, walk by the Spirit, and you will not gratify the desires of the flesh.

17 For the flesh desires what is contrary to the Spirit, and the Spirit what is contrary to the flesh. They are in conflict with each other, so that you are not to do whatever you want.

18 But if you are led by the Spirit, you are not under the law.”

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V. The Key to Victory

Gal 4:31

“Therefore, brothers and sisters, we are not children of the slave woman, but of the free woman.”

Rom 8:15

“The Spirit you received does not make you slaves, so that you live in fear again; rather, the Spirit you received brought about your adoption to sonship. And by him we cry, “Abba Father.”

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"It's worth reminding ourselves of the extreme relevance of all this. Many people look at the issues Paul is passionate about here and they just yawn. They say, "Paul, you are dealing with theological speculation. I've got other problems. My marriage is in trouble. I can't pay my bills. I've got a lot of personal problems. You would do me much more good by teaching me about those things than going on and on with your theology about being right with God." But Paul would respond, "The most important thing in your life is being right with God. If that isn't right, then nothing else really matters. If that is right, God will bless you and teach you about your marriage, your money, and your personal problems. Regarding the solutions to our day-to-day problems, Jesus said "seek first the kingdom of God and His righteousness, and all these things shall be added to you.'" (David Guzik)

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