

Gal. 4:21 Tell me, you who desire to be under the law, do you not hear the law?

4:22 For it is written that Abraham had two sons: the one by a bondwoman, the other by a freewoman.

4:23 But he who was of the bondwoman was born according to the flesh, and he of the freewoman through promise,

4:24 which things are symbolic. For these are the two covenants: the one from Mount Sinai which gives birth to bondage, which is Hagar-

4:25 for this Hagar is Mount Sinai in Arabia, and corresponds to Jerusalem which now is, and is in bondage with her children-

4:26 but the Jerusalem above is free, which is the mother of us all.

4:27 For it is written: "Rejoice, O barren, You who do not bear! Break forth and shout, You who are not in labor! For the desolate has many more children Than she who has a husband."

4:28 Now we, brethren, as Isaac was, are children of promise.

4:29 But, as he who was born according to the flesh then persecuted him who was born according to the Spirit, even so it is now.

4:30 Nevertheless what does the Scripture say? "Cast out the bondwoman and her son, for the son of the bondwoman shall not be heir with the son of the freewoman."

4:31 So then, brethren, we are not children of the bondwoman but of the free.

5:1 Stand fast therefore in the liberty by which Christ has made us free, and do not be entangled again with a yoke of bondage.

March 8, 2026 Galatians 4:21-5:1

Sermon Title: "The Daughter of Freedom Was Born of the Promise"

[From Today's Sermon]

We encounter Hagar, the female slave of Abraham's wife Sarah.

Seeing that she could not conceive, Sarah asked her maidservant to bear her a child. Thus, Ishmael was given to her (Genesis 16). However, once Hagar became pregnant, she began to look down on her mistress Sarah, leading to conflict.

Later, through God's wondrous work, a child was born to Abraham, who was 100 years old, and Sarah, who was 90. This left Hagar and Ishmael with no place to stay. Yet God protected them as they left, and made a nation from Ishmael's descendants. This is the Arab people of today. Muhammad, the founder of Islam, is said to be a descendant of this Ishmael.

Today's passage also mentions Isaac and Ishmael. The Israelites claimed they were "born Jews, not Gentile sinners." But Paul says: "The slave woman's child was born according to the

flesh, but the free woman's child was born through the promise. ... Hagar corresponds to the Arabian Sinai, which is now Jerusalem, for she is in bondage with her children. But the Jerusalem above is free, and she is our mother." ... Paul declares that salvation comes not through the flesh, through one's own efforts, but through the covenant of promise.

Introduction: Abraham, His Wife Sarah, Sarah's Maidservant Hagar, and Their Sons Isaac and Ishmael

Genesis 16:1 Now Sarai, Abram's wife, had borne him no children. She had a maidservant, an Egyptian woman named Hagar.

16:2 So Sarai said to Abram, "The Lord has prevented me from having children. Go in to my maidservant; perhaps I can build a family through her." And Abram listened to his wife Sarai.

16:3 So Sarai, Abram's wife, took her Egyptian maidservant Hagar and gave her to her husband Abram as his wife. This was after Abram had lived ten years in the land of Canaan.

16:4 Abram went in to Hagar, and she conceived. When she realized she was pregnant, she began to despise her mistress.

16:5 Then Sarai said to Abram, "This wrong done to me is your fault. I gave my maidservant to your bosom, and when she saw that she was with child, she began to despise me. May the LORD judge between you and me."

16:6 Abram said to Sarai, "Your maidservant is in your hands; do with her whatever you think best." So Sarai mistreated her, and she fled from her presence.

16:7 The angel of the Lord found her by a spring in the wilderness, the spring on the road to Shur.

16:8 The angel asked, "Hagar, Sarai's servant, where have you come from, and where are you going?" She answered, "I am fleeing from my mistress Sarai."

16:9 The angel of the Lord said to her, "Return to your mistress and submit to her."

16:10 The angel of the Lord also said to her, "I will greatly multiply your descendants; they will be too numerous to count."

16:11 The angel of the Lord also said to her, "You are now pregnant and will give birth to a son. You shall name him Ishmael, The Lord has heard your affliction.

16:12 He will be a wild donkey of a man; his hand will be against everyone, and everyone's hand against him. He will live in hostility toward all his brothers."

16:13 So she called the name of the Lord who spoke to her, "You are El Roi." This was because she said, "Here I have seen the One who sees me."

16:14 Therefore the well was called Beer-lahai-roi. It is between Kadesh and Bered.

16:15 Hagar bore a son for Abram. Abram named the son whom Hagar bore Ishmael.

16:16 When Hagar bore Ishmael to Abram, Abram was eighty-six years old.

17:15 God also said to Abraham, "As for your wife Sarai, you shall no longer call her Sarai, but Sarah shall be her name.

17:16 I will bless her and give you a son by her. I will bless her and make her the mother of nations; kings of peoples will come from her."

17:17 Abraham bowed his head and laughed, saying to himself, "Can a child be born to a man a hundred years old? And Sarah, who is ninety years old, will she bear a child?"

17:18 And Abraham said to God, "Oh that Ishmael might live before You!"

17:19 But God said, "No, but Sarah your wife shall bear you a son, and you shall call his name Isaac. And I will establish My covenant with him as an everlasting covenant for his descendants after him.

17:20 As for Ishmael, I have heard your plea. I will bless him and make him fruitful; I will greatly increase his numbers. He will father twelve rulers, and I will make him into a great nation.

17:21 But it is Isaac, whom Sarah will bear to you at this time next year, with whom I will establish my covenant."

17:22 When God had finished speaking with Abraham, he departed from him.

17:23 That very day Abraham took his son Ishmael and all those born in his house and all those bought with his money—every male among the men of Abraham's household—and circumcised the foreskin of every male, just as God had told him.

17:24 Abraham was ninety-nine years old when he was circumcised in the flesh of his foreskin.

17:25 And his son Ishmael was thirteen years old when he was circumcised in the flesh of his foreskin.

17:26 On that very day Abraham and his son Ishmael were circumcised.

17:27 All his household, both those born in his house and those bought with his money from any foreigner, were circumcised with him.

18:1 The Lord appeared to Abraham by the oaks of Mamre, while he sat at the entrance of his tent in the heat of the day.

18:2 He looked up and saw three men standing before him. When he saw them, he ran from the entrance of his tent to meet them and bowed low to the ground.

18:3 He said, "My lord, if I have found favor in your sight, please do not pass by your servant.

18:4 Let a little water be brought, and wash your feet, and rest yourselves under the tree.

18:5 I will bring you a morsel of bread, that you may refresh yourselves, and then go on your way, since you have come to your servant." They said, "Do as you have said."

18:6 So Abraham hurried into the tent to Sarah and said, "Hurry and take three measures of fine flour, knead it, and make cakes."

18:7 He ran to his herd, took a tender and choice calf, and gave it to a young man, who quickly prepared it.

18:8 Then Abraham took curds and milk and the calf he had prepared, and set it before them. He stood by them under the tree and served them, and they ate.

18:9 They said to Abraham, "Where is your wife Sarah?" He replied, "She is in the tent."

18:10 One of them said, "I will surely return to you next spring, and by then your wife Sarah will have a son." Sarah was listening at the entrance of the tent behind him.

18:11 Now Abraham and Sarah were old and well advanced in years, and Sarah had ceased to have her monthly period.

18:12 So Sarah laughed to herself, saying, "After I have grown old and my master is old, shall I have this pleasure?"

18:13 The Lord said to Abraham, "Why did Sarah laugh and say, 'Shall I indeed bear a child, now that I am old?'

18:14 Is anything too hard for the Lord? At the appointed time next spring I will return to you, and Sarah will have a son."

18:15 Sarah was afraid, so she denied it, saying, "I did not laugh." But the Lord said, "No, you did laugh."

21:1 As the Lord had promised, he remembered Sarah and did for her just as he had told Abraham.

21:2 Sarah conceived and bore a son to Abraham in his old age, at the time God had promised

him.

21:3 Abraham named the child born to him, the son Sarah bore, Isaac.

21:4 On the eighth day Abraham circumcised his son Isaac, as God had commanded him.

21:5 Abraham was a hundred years old when his son Isaac was born.

21:6 And Sarah said, "God has made me laugh, and everyone who hears will laugh with me."

21:7 She also said, "Who would have told Abraham that Sarah would nurse children? Yet I have borne him a son in his old age."

21:8 The child grew and was weaned. On the day Isaac was weaned, Abraham held a great feast.

21:9 When Sarah saw the son whom Hagar the Egyptian had borne to Abraham playing with her son Isaac,

21:10 she said to Abraham, "Cast out this slave woman and her son, for the son of this slave woman shall not be heir with my son Isaac."

21:11 Abraham was greatly distressed on account of his son.

21:12 But God said to Abraham, "Do not be distressed about the boy or your concubine. Listen to whatever Sarah tells you, because through Isaac your offspring will be reckoned.

21:13 What is the concubine's son? I will make him into a nation because he is your offspring."

21:14 So Abraham rose early in the morning, took bread and a skin of water, and gave them to Hagar, placing them on her shoulder. He also sent the boy away with her. She wandered in the wilderness of Beersheba.

21:15 When the water in the skin was gone, she left the boy under one of the bushes.

21:16 "I cannot bear to see the boy die." So she went and sat down at a distance, about a bowshot away, and sat facing the boy. As she sat facing the boy, he began to cry aloud.

21:17 God heard the boy crying, and the angel of God called to Hagar from heaven and said to her, "Hagar, what troubles you? Do not be afraid, for God has heard the boy crying.

21:18 Get up, lift up the boy and hold him in your arms. I will make him into a great nation."

21:19 Then God opened Hagar's eyes, and she saw a well of water. She went and filled the skin with water and gave the boy a drink.

21:20 God was with the boy, and he grew up. He lived in the wilderness and became an archer.

21:21 He lived in the wilderness of Paran. His mother got a wife for him from the land of

Egypt.

Introduction: What the law could not do because of the weakness of the flesh, God did.

Romans 8:1 Therefore, there is now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus.

8:2 For the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus has set you free from the law of sin and death.

8:3 For what the law could not do, God did by sending his own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh as an offering for sin. He condemned sin in the flesh,

8:4 This was to fulfill the requirement of the law, that we might walk by the Spirit and not by the flesh.

8:5 For those who live according to the flesh set their minds on the things of the flesh, but those who live according to the Spirit set their minds on the things of the Spirit.

8:6 For the mind set on the flesh is death, but the mind set on the Spirit is life and peace.

Prologue: The truth will set you free

John 8:31 Jesus said to the Jews who had believed in him, "If you abide in my word, you are truly my disciples.

8:32 And you will know the truth, and the truth will set you free."

Good morning, everyone.

Yesterday brought snow and sleet. Though they say "three cold days, four warm days," please take care of yourselves during this time of significant temperature swings.

Now, before we enter the Easter passage, this is the final section of Galatians. We have reached the end of chapter 4. Today, through a striking parable, Paul speaks of salvation through the covenant of promise—salvation that brings freedom.

4:21 You who want to remain under the law, tell me: don't you listen to what the law says?

4:22 For it is written that Abraham had two sons, one by a slave woman and one by a free woman.

4:23 The son of the slave woman was born according to the flesh, but the son of the free woman was born through the promise.

4:24 This is an allegory: the women represent two covenants. One covenant is from Mount Sinai and bears children who are to be slaves; this is Hagar.

4:25 Now Hagar is Mount Sinai in Arabia and corresponds to the present Jerusalem, for she is in slavery with her children.

4:26 But the Jerusalem above is free, and she is our mother.

4:27 For it is written: "Rejoice, barren woman, you who do not bear! Break forth and cry aloud, you who are not in labor! For the children of the desolate one are more than those of the married woman."

4:28 Brothers and sisters, you are children of the promise, like Isaac.

Abraham had two sons: Isaac and Ishmael.

This refers to Hagar, the slave woman of Abraham's wife Sarah.

Seeing that she could not conceive, Sarah asked her slave woman to bear a child for her. Thus Ishmael was given to her (Genesis 16). However, once Hagar became pregnant, she began to despise her mistress Sarah, leading to conflict.

Later, through God's miraculous work, a child was born to Abraham at 100 years old and Sarah at 90. This left no place for Hagar or Ishmael. Yet God protected them as they left, and made the descendants of Ishmael into a nation. This is the Arab people of today. Muhammad, the founder of Islam, is said to be a descendant of Ishmael.

Today's passage also mentions Isaac and Ishmael. The Israelites claimed they were "born Jews, not Gentile sinners." But Paul says: "The child of the slave woman was born according to the flesh, but the child of the free woman was born through the promise." ...Now Hagar is Mount Sinai in Arabia and corresponds to the present Jerusalem, for she is in bondage with her children. But the Jerusalem above is free, and she is our mother."... Paul declares that salvation comes not through flesh or human effort, but through the covenant of promise.

An unbelievable event actually occurred: Isaac was given, not through human deeds or effort, not through plans or desires, but solely as God's promise was fulfilled.

This is contrasted with righteousness by the law and the gracious covenant—the covenant granting freedom through Jesus Christ.

4:29 But just as at that time the one born according to the flesh persecuted the one born according to the Spirit, so it is now.

4:30 Yet what does the Scripture say? “Cast out the slave woman and her son, for the son of the slave woman shall not inherit with the son of the free woman.”

4:31 Therefore, brothers and sisters, we are not children of the slave woman, but children of the free woman.

5:1 For freedom Christ has set us free. Stand firm, then, and do not let yourselves be burdened again by a yoke of slavery.

Isaiah 9:1 The people walking in darkness have seen a great light; on those living in the land of the shadow of death a light has dawned.

9:2 You have given them great joy and delight; they rejoice before you as with the joy at the harvest, as people exult when dividing plunder.

9:3 For the yoke of their burden, the staff on their shoulders, the rod of their oppressor, you have broken as on the day of Midian.

9:4 Every boot of the tramping warrior, every garment rolled in blood, will be burned as fuel for the fire.

9:5 For unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given: and the government shall be upon his shoulder: and his name shall be called Wonderful, Counsellor, The Mighty God, The Everlasting Father, The Prince of Peace.

9:6 Of the increase of his government and peace there shall be no end, upon the throne of David, and upon his kingdom, to order it, and to establish it with judgment and with justice from henceforth even for ever. The zeal of the Lord of hosts will perform this.

“The zeal of the Lord of hosts will perform this.”

This week, may we savor the Lord's faithfulness in guiding us. May we give thanks that He works in the depths beyond our own strength, leading us by the Spirit of freedom, and may we desire to entrust ourselves to His guidance in prayer.

2 Corinthians 3:1 Are we beginning to commend ourselves again? Or do we need, as some do, letters of recommendation to you or from you?

3:2 You yourselves are our letter of recommendation, written on our hearts, known and read by all.

3:3 You are made public as a letter from Christ written by us, written not with ink but with the Spirit of the living God, not on tablets of stone but on tablets of human hearts.

3:4 Now such confidence we have through Christ before God.

3:5 Not that we are competent in ourselves to claim anything for ourselves, but our competence comes from God.

3:6 God has given us the authority to serve in the new covenant, not in the letter but in the Spirit. For the letter kills, but the Spirit gives life.

3:7 Now if the ministry that brought death, which was engraved in stones, came with such glory that the Israelites could not look directly at Moses' face because of its temporary glory,

3:8 how much more glorious is the ministry that brings life!

3:9 If the ministry that brought condemnation was glorious, how much more glorious is the ministry that brings righteousness!

3:10 For what had been glorified lost its glory because of the greater glory.

3:11 For if what was fading away came with glory, how much greater is the glory of that which endures!

3:12 And since we have such a hope, we act with great confidence,

3:13 not like Moses, who put a veil over his face so that the children of Israel might not gaze at the end of what was fading away.

3:14 But their minds were dulled. To this day, when the old covenant is read, that same veil remains unlifted, because only in Christ is it taken away.

3:15 Even to this day, whenever Moses is read, a veil lies over their hearts.

3:16 But whenever anyone turns to the Lord, the veil is taken away.

3:17 Now the Lord is the Spirit, and where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is freedom.

3:18 And we all, with unveiled faces, beholding the glory of the Lord, are being transformed into the same image from one degree of glory to another, for this comes from the Lord who is the Spirit.

James 1:19 My dear brothers and sisters, understand this: Everyone should be quick to listen, slow to speak, and slow to become angry.

1:20 For human anger does not bring about the righteousness that God desires.

1:21 Therefore, rid yourselves of all moral filth and the evil that is so prevalent, and humbly accept the word planted in your hearts,

This word can save your souls. 1:22 But be doers of the word, and not hearers only, deceiving yourselves. 1:23 For if anyone is a hearer of the word and not a doer, he is like a man who looks at his natural face in a mirror; 1:24 for he looks at himself and goes away, and immediately forgets what he was like. 1:25 But the one who looks intently into the perfect law that gives freedom and perseveres in it—not being a forgetful hearer but a doer—will be blessed in what he does. 1:26 If anyone thinks he is religious and yet does not bridle his tongue but deceives his heart, this person’s religion is worthless. 1:27 But religion that God our Father accepts as pure and faultless is this: to look after orphans and widows in their distress and to keep oneself from being polluted by the world. Acts 17:28 As some of your own poets have said, ‘We live and move and have our being in him,’ for we are his offspring. ◇Prayer: Heavenly Father God, we thank You for today's worship. We thank You for the grace that “God did what the law could not do because of the weakness of the flesh: He sent His Son in the likeness of sinful flesh to deal with sin in the flesh, condemning sin in the flesh (Romans 8).” We also give thanks for the words: “If you abide in my word, you are truly my disciples. You will know the truth, and the truth will set you free.” Guide all who suffer into God's salvation and peace. Bless our families and our neighbors. Use us for your purposes. We pray in the name of our Lord Jesus. Amen.