

# Children of Promise

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## Galatians 4:21-31

**T**rusting God can seem risky. What if He lets us down? Still worse, what if our faith is simply foolishness? When such thoughts enter our minds, it's easy to panic. We are tempted to take back what we have entrusted to God. We feel safer taking matters into our own hands.

Abraham felt these struggles while waiting for God's promise of a son. He rushed God's plan and had a son through his slave Hagar. Later, even though he and Sarah were very old, the promised son was born.

This story has become a timeless illustration of do-it-yourself religion versus trust in the promises of God.

This study will explore Paul's unusual take on the story of Hagar and Sarah and their sons born to Abraham.

### *Abraham's Two Sons*

#### **Read Galatians 4:21-27.**

**1. Why does Paul say that this story is found in the law? He has already stated that this happened before the law was given. (v. 21)**

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**2. Read Genesis 15:1-16 and 21:2-10. Who was the slave woman and what was her son called? Who was the free woman and what was the name of her son? (v. 22)**

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**3. Based on what you read in the Genesis passages, what did Paul mean when he wrote that the slave woman's son was "born in the ordinary way"? (v. 23)**

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**4. Based on what you learned from Genesis, what unusual circumstances showed that the free woman's son was the result of God's promise and doing? (v. 23)**

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**5. The women represent two covenants. What covenant does Hagar represent? What are her children destined to be (figuratively speaking)? (v. 24)**

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**What place does Mount Sinai, which is identified with the old covenant, also correspond to? What does this place have in common with Mount Sinai? (v.25)**

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**6. What does Paul contrast with the present city of Jerusalem? What is our connection to this? (v. 26)**

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**7. What does the scripture quoted by Paul have to do with the Jerusalem that is above? (v. 27)**

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*I'm Like "Ike"*

**Read Galatians 4:28-31.**

**8. In what way are the Galatians and all of us who believe like Isaac? (vv. 28-29)**

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**9. Read Genesis 21:9. How did Ishmael persecute Isaac? (v. 29)**

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**10. Read Genesis 21:10. What do you think is the most important part of what Sarah said? (v. 30)**

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**11. While the Jews boast to the Gentiles that they are children of Abraham, what fact gives the Gentiles (and all believers) a much greater assurance? (v. 31)**

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**12. Compare and contrast the two women and their sons below. (vv. 24-30)**

HAGAR / ISHMAEL	SARAH / ISAAC

**13. While the Jews boast that they are children of Abraham, what fact gives the Gentiles (and all believers) a much greater assurance? (v. 31)**

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*Life Application*

**14. In what ways is our spiritual freedom today challenged by man-made rules and expectations?**

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**15. How do the two sons, two covenants and two cities illustrate two sharply contrasting views of salvation?**

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*Thank God that you are a child of promise and have the hope of coming into His glorious inheritance. Pray that you will always trust Him and have the patience to wait upon Him.*