

What follows represents the unedited lecture notes of Pastor Merritt's teaching of the Book of Galatians. Please feel free to reproduce all or part for the glory of the Lord Jesus Christ.

Galatians Lesson

8-20-2017

1. Last week I taught in part Gal 4:27 and when time expired we were reviewing the *Doctrine of Ishmael*.
2. Let's first use the provisions of 1Jo 1:9 by silently naming sin to God and then we will see how Gal 4:21-27 looks by way of an expanded translation.

Expanded Translation

Gal 4:21 What? Are you telling me you want to be under the Mosaic Law? Have you not been listening to what the law says?

Gal 4:22 For you see it has been written in Gen 16:1-16 that Abram fathered two sons, one by his slave and the other by his wife Sarai.

Gal 4:23 But most assuredly indeed the son of the slave was born after the flesh in the ordinary way; but the other son, Isaac was born as a direct result of God's promise.

Gal 4:24 What we have here must be taken figuratively, for the women represent two testimonies; One covenant is from Mount Sinai and bears children who are to be slaves to the law: These are the followers of Hagar and her son Ishmael.

Gal 4:25 And now Jerusalem is just like Mount Sinai, because she and her children live in slavery to the law.

Gal 4:26 But the heavenly Jerusalem from above, the mother of us all represents our freedom as members of God's forever family both in time and eternity.

Gal 4:27 For it has been written in Isa 54:1, Be happy and rejoice, O barren woman who at first bore no children; break forth and cry out loud princess, you who also bore no labor pains as did Hagar; Why rejoice? Because when Christ returns at the Second Advent you will have more children than Hagar.

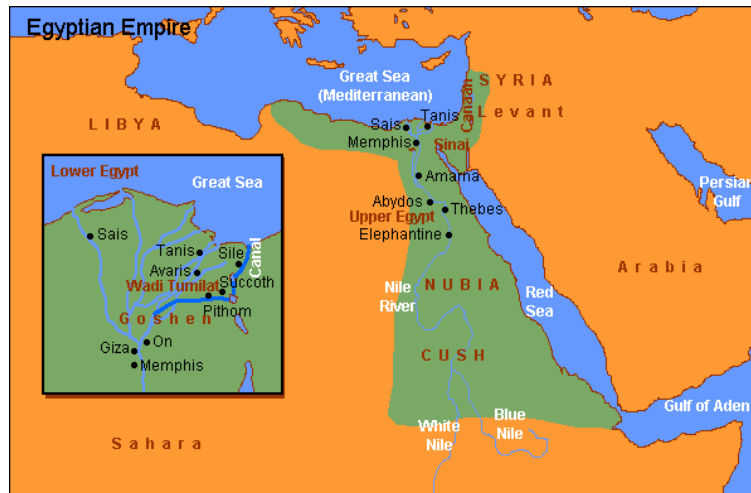
3. At the time of Paul's writing of the book of Galatians the descendants of Ishmael (unbelievers) far exceeded the descendants of Isaac (believers). This continues even today. In a world of 6.9 billion people, Christians total only 2.18 billion leaving 4.22 billion unbelievers. In Isa 54:1 and Gal 4:27 a celebration will occur because when Christ returns at the 2nd Advent the scoreboard will read "Christians Trillions" --- "Unbelievers Zero."

4. At the Second Advent, God regathers all believers from the Gentile Age, the Age of Israel and the Tribulation and destroys all unbelievers thus fulfilling the prophecy of Isaiah chapter 54. It is at this time the barren woman is ordered to sing.

5. Let's return to the *Doctrine of Ishmael*.

Doctrine of Ishmael

1. Ishmael was the firstborn son of Abraham by Hagar, an Egyptian maid of his wife Sarah. Abraham was 86 at the time and had lived in Canaan for 11 years. A map of the Egyptian Empire shows Canaan as part of that empire.



2. When Abraham was 99 God renewed His covenant with him and ordered the circumcision of Ishmael as a sign of his membership in the covenant community.

3. God however, promptly announced that He would fulfill the divine promise through Abram and his wife Sarai.

4. Fourteen years after the birth of Ishmael the divine promise was fulfilled. Isaac was born to Sarah and Abraham. The jealousy that had long separated Sarah from Hagar came to a breaking point at the time of the weaning of Isaac. Sarah insisted that Hagar and Ishmael leave to live in the wilderness of Paran. (See the map on the next page for the location of Paran).

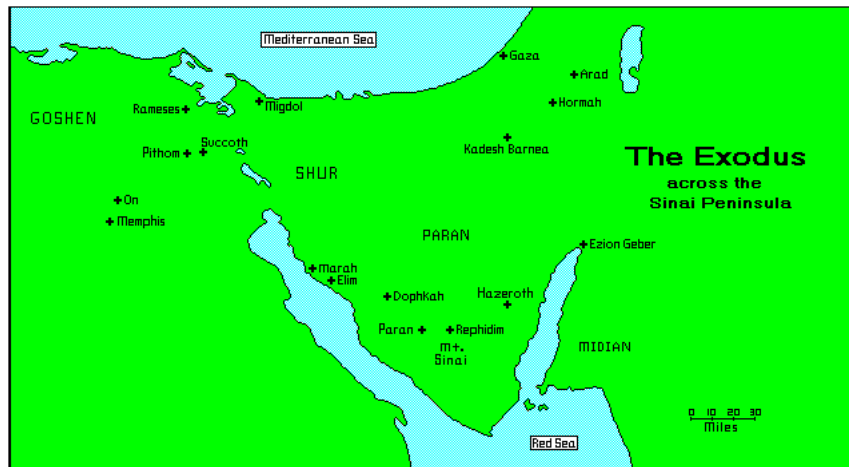
5. Abraham agreed though reluctantly. He was somewhat assuaged when God announced a blessing on the boy and his descendants. Gal 21:10-13

Gen 21:10 Wherefore she said unto Abraham, Cast out this bondwoman and her son: for the son of this bondwoman shall not be heir with my son, even with Isaac.

Gen 21:11 And the thing was very grievous in Abraham's sight because of his son.

Gen 21:12 And God said unto Abraham, Let it not be grievous in thy sight because of the lad, and because of thy bondwoman; in all that Sarah hath said unto thee, hearken unto her voice; for in Isaac shall thy seed be called.

Gen 21:13 And also of the son of the bondwoman will I make a nation, because he is thy seed.



6. There is no record in the Scripture or elsewhere of animosity developing between Ishmael and Isaac. For example, both sons tended to the burial of Abraham in the cave of Machpelah at Mamre, a city two miles north of Hebron in the south of Canaan.

7. While Isaac was his sole heir, Abraham did endow Ishmael and the sons of his concubines (Hagar and Keturah) while he was still living.

8. Therefore Ishmael received some of Abraham's material goods. Keturah's sons were sent away eastward toward Jordan and Iraq, whereas Ishmael went to the southwest toward Egypt and Saudi Arabia.



9. Ishmael is mentioned 44 times in the Old Testament but none in the New Testament.

10. Now let's resume our exegesis of Gal 4:28. I want to review some of that learned last week and then begin new material at point six on page six.

NIV

Gal 4:28 Now you, brothers, like Isaac, are children of promise.

NOW YOU, BROTHERS, ΔΕ ΣΥ, ΑΔΕΛΦΟΣ,

1. **De Su Adelphos** is better translated “Now you, my brothers and sisters in Christ ...”
2. **Adelphos** appears more than 200 times in Scripture where it is generally translated “brother, brothers” or “brethren.” Gal 1:1-4, 11; Rom 1:13; 1Co 6:7-8

LIKE ISAAC, ΚΑΤΑ ΙΣΑΑΚ,

1. **Kata Isaak** is better translated “just as Isaak was ...”
2. Isaac was the name, given by God before the birth of the child. Gen 17:19
3. Isaac means "he laughs" or "he who laughs." This name was given to the boy because Sarai laughed when God said “in your old age you shall have a child.” Abraham was also in a state of disbelief. Let me give you several points about Isaac.
4. Let me give you several points about the implied verb “eimi” translated “was.” It is called an elliptical or an ellipsis. It was in antiquity translated with emphasis. There is usually no emphasis translated today. Examples:

Phi 1:13 So that my bonds in Christ '**are**' manifest in all the palace, and in all other places;

Phi 1:14 And many of the brethren in the Lord, waxing confident by my bonds, are much more bold to speak the word without fear.

Col 1:18 And he is the head of the body, the church: who is the beginning, the firstborn from the dead; that in all things he '**might have**' the preeminence.

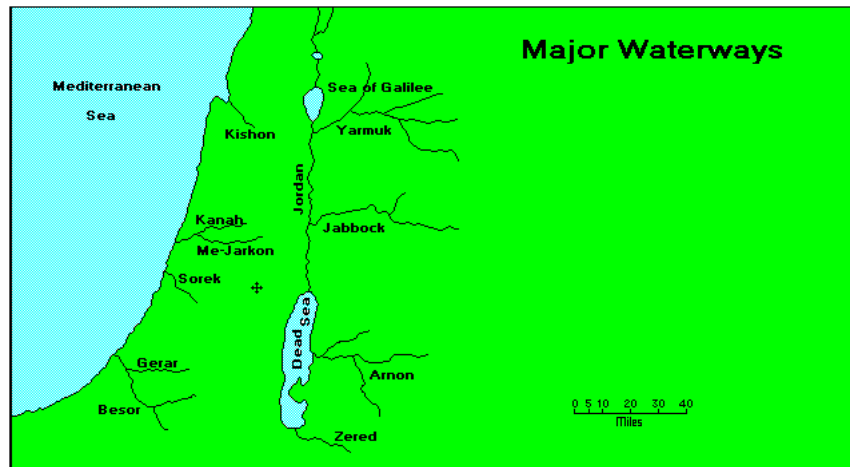
1Th 1:6 And ye '**became**' followers of us, and of the Lord, having received the word in much affliction, with joy of the Holy Ghost.

1Ti 2:14 And Adam was not deceived, but the woman being deceived '**was**' in the transgression.

5. Let's review the *Doctrine of Isaac*:

Background

1. Isaac was born to Abraham and Sarah in Gerar when they were 100 and 90 years respectively. Gerar was located in what today we call the Gaza strip. (See map below)



2. Isaac was the first to be circumcised in the normal course, when eight days old. This was done in recognition of the covenant promise between God and Isaac as the promised child.

3. The presence of Hagar and her son Ishmael was a disturbing factor in the household, and by divine command they were dismissed. Ishmael at this time was about 16 or 17 years old.

4. Little is known of the early boyhood of Isaac. We see him strong enough to carry the wood for the altar fire up the mountain slope, not knowing that he himself would be placed on that altar. The experience of being bound as a sacrificial victim and then delivered by divine intervention must have deeply affected his whole life.

5. Isaac was 37 years old when his mother died in Hebron. Three years later his marriage to Rebekah took place at Lahai-roi a city near Paran. Isaac accepted the marriage arrangement made by his father, as ordered by the Lord; Isaac's representative was sent north to Mesopotamia to find a wife and that he successfully did at the city of Nahor near Haran. (Genesis chapter 24)

5.1 The representative of Isaac was given a sign to use in his selection (lady bringing a pitcher to the well). Rebekah's parents permitted her to leave home to marry Isaac.

6. Isaac was 40 years old when he married, and he waited another 20 years for an offspring. Then came the twins, Esau and Jacob, bringing new conflict into the home. The favoritism of the parents fostered the struggle for power in the children culminating in Jacob's deception by which he secured the patriarchal blessing from a then old and blind Isaac.

7. Isaac in an earlier sojourn in Gerar brought out behavior reminiscent of his father. (Gen 26:6-11)

Gen 26:6 So Isaac stayed in Gerar.

Gen 26:7 When the men of that place asked him about his wife, he said, "She is my sister," because he was afraid to say, "She is my wife." He thought, "The men of this place might kill me on account of Rebekah, because she is beautiful."

Gen 26:8 When Isaac had been there a long time, Abimelech king of the Philistines looked down from a window and saw Isaac caressing his wife Rebekah.

Gen 26:9 So Abimelech summoned Isaac and said, "She is really your wife! Why did you say, 'She is my sister'?" Isaac answered him, "Because I thought I might lose my life on account of her."

Gen 26:10 Then Abimelech said, "What is this you have done to us? One of the men might well have slept with your wife, and you would have brought guilt upon us."

Gen 26:11 So Abimelech gave orders to all the people: "Anyone who molests this man or his wife shall surely be put to death."

8. Isaac passed off Rebekah as his sister, reckoning that a brother would not be in the same danger as a husband. His prosperity in Gerar made him unpopular, so that not only did the Philistine chief invite him to leave, but the herdsmen disputed his right to use certain wells dug by Isaac's herdsmen.

8.1 Later Abimelech came to Isaac with his army. Recall this was the same Philistine king who had sent Isaac and Rebekah away. Isaac was fearful of the king even though the King had ordered no one to hurt Isaac and his bride. The King again spoke words of peace and respect to Isaac.

Gen 26:27 Isaac asked them, "Why have you come to me, since you were hostile to me and sent me away?"

Gen 26:28 They answered, "We saw clearly that the LORD was with you; so we said, 'There ought to be a sworn agreement between us' -- between us and you. Let us make a treaty with you

Gen 26:29 that you will do us no harm, just as we did not molest you but always treated you well and sent you away in peace. And now you are blessed by the LORD."

9. The return to Beer-sheba was attended with the Lord's blessing and a renewal of the divine promise of blessing to Isaac's descendants. (Gen 26:23-24).

Gen 26:23 From there he went up to Beersheba.

Gen 26:24 That night the LORD appeared to him and said, "I am the God of your father Abraham. Do not be afraid, for I am with you; I will bless you and will increase the number of your descendants for the sake of my servant Abraham."

10. But Isaac had his sorrows at Beersheba. Esau's wives (Esau married two Hittite women) distressed both him and Rebekah, but still more painful was his son Jacob's deceit, instigated by his mother. There Isaac saw his two sons part company. Isaac was already old and dim sighted when Jacob left for Padan-aram.

11. Twenty years later, when Jacob returned, Isaac was still alive and dwelling in Hebron, where he had buried Rebekah. There he died, at the age of 180, where his reconciled sons buried him.

Character

1. Isaac was neither as great as Abraham nor as colorful as Jacob. Yet he filled an important place in Israel's history.

2. The meekness of Isaac is seen in his refusal to argue with the herdsmen of Gerar. Recall he had dug two wells and under threat from the herdsman of Gerar he had surrendered the first two; only to dig a third which he was permitted to keep.

3. He seemed to have an affectionate nature, deeply attached to his mother, grieving her passing, and then comforted in his love for Rebekah. His meditative spirit may have contributed to his outgoing affection.

4. He was a man in touch with God. He had communicated with and obeyed God's commands.

5. He is included in the roster of heroes of faith in Hebrews chapter 11.

Heb 11:17 By faith Abraham, when God tested him, offered Isaac as a sacrifice. He who had received the promises was about to sacrifice his one and only son,

Heb 11:18 even though God had said to him, "It is through Isaac that your offspring will be reckoned."

Heb 11:19 Abraham reasoned that God could raise the dead, and figuratively speaking, he did receive Isaac back from death.

Heb 11:20 By faith Isaac blessed Jacob and Esau in regard to their future.

6. Like all men, Isaac had his faults. Two grave ones can be mentioned. He lacked wisdom to avoid paternal favoritism. Perhaps it was Rebekah's manifest partiality for Jacob that induced Isaac to champion Esau.

Spiritual applications

1. At the burning bush God introduced Himself to Moses as "the God of thy father, the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob." (Exo 3:6)

1.1 Our Lord took up the triple designation of God to confute the Sadducees and to confirm faith in the resurrection. (Mat 22:30-32)

2. Isaac is presented in Rom 9:7 as a typical case of sovereign election. So far as the covenant was concerned, Ishmael was ruled out, as were the sons of Keturah. Natural generation does not give one a place in the kingdom of God. That is the privilege of the called, whose calling is made evident by their faith.

3. The birth of Isaac was the fruit of faith - not only Abraham's, but Sarah's. (Heb 11:11)

3.1 Her incredulous laughter gave place to faith, and the senile womb revived. Spiritual birth is always a miraculous operation in response to faith.

4. Abraham's faith also centered in Isaac. He believed the Word of God in face of all natural impossibilities. He took a hard look at his own impotence and at Sarah's ninety years, and still believed God. It was this faith that gave Abraham a standing in righteousness before God. Isaac was the fruit of justifying faith.

5. The command to offer Isaac on the altar further tested Abraham's faith. How could the death of Isaac fit in with all the divine promises? Abraham had the answer of faith, that "God was able to raise him up, even from the dead." So Isaac became a figure of life from the dead, or, to give it a New Testament turn, the new life in Christ. (Heb 11:17-19; Rom 6:3-5)

5.1 Isaac also appears here as a prefiguration of Christ, the obedient Son, who was "obedient unto death, yea, the death of the cross."

End Lesson Taught 8-20-2017

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