

# Galatians 4:27

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

For it is written, Rejoice, thou barren that bearest not; break forth and cry, thou that travailest not: for the desolate hath many more children than she which hath an husband.

## Analysis

**For it is written, Rejoice, thou barren that bearest not; break forth and cry, thou that travailest not: for the desolate hath many more children than she which hath an husband.** Paul cites Isaiah 54:1 to support his argument. The prophet addressed exiled Israel as a barren woman who would miraculously bear many children. Paul applies this to Sarah and the church. "Rejoice, thou barren that bearest not" (euphran thē, steira hē ou tiktousa, εὐφράνθητι, στεῖρα ἡ οὐ τίκτουσα)—the barren one (Sarah, unable to conceive naturally) is commanded to rejoice.

"Break forth and cry, thou that travailest not" (rhēxon kai boēson, hē ouk ὄδινοusa)—shout joyfully, you who don't experience labor pains (because you don't give birth naturally). "For the desolate hath many more children than she which hath an husband" (hoti polla ta tekna tēs erēmou mallon ē tēs echousēs ton andra)—the abandoned, desolate woman (Sarah-type, the promise-covenant) has more children than the woman with a husband (Hagar-type, the law-covenant). This prophesies the gospel's success among Gentiles: multitudes of 'barren' Gentiles (outside covenant) would become God's children through faith, outnumbering ethnic Jews.

## Historical Context

Isaiah 54:1 originally encouraged exiled Israel with promise of restoration and multiplication. Paul sees deeper fulfillment: the new covenant community, once

'barren' (Gentiles without covenant privileges), would explode with growth, far surpassing old covenant Israel's numbers. Church history validated this: Christianity spread rapidly among Gentiles, eventually encompassing far more people than Judaism ever did. The 'impossible' fertility of aged Sarah, bearing Isaac, prefigured the 'impossible' multiplication of Gentile believers through the gospel.

## Related Passages

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**Hebrews 11:1** — Definition of faith

**Romans 1:17** — The righteous shall live by faith

## Study Questions

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1. How does God specialize in bringing spiritual fruit from 'barren' situations—people and circumstances that seem spiritually dead?
2. What barren areas of your life need to hear God's command: 'Rejoice! Break forth and cry!?
3. How does the global spread of the gospel among all nations fulfill God's promise that the 'desolate' would have more children than the privileged?

## Interlinear Text

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γέγραπται γάρ Εὐφράνθητι στεῖρα ἡ οὐκ τίκτουσα  
it is written For Rejoice thou barren G3588 not that bearest  
G1125 G1063 G2165 G4723 G3756 G5088

βῆξον καὶ βόησον ἡ οὐκ ὀδίνουσα· ὅτι  
break forth and cry G3588 not thou that travailest for  
G4486 G2532 G994 G3756 G5605 G3754

πολλὰ τὰ τέκνα τῆς ἐρήμου μᾶλλον ἡ τῆς  
hath many more G3588 children G3588 the desolate than G2228 G3588  
G4183 G5043 G2048 G3123

ἔχούσης τὸν ἄνδρα  
she which hath G3588 an husband  
G2192 G435

## Additional Cross-References

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**Psalms 113:9** (Parallel theme): He maketh the barren woman to keep house, and to be a joyful mother of children. Praise ye the LORD.

**1 Samuel 2:5** (Parallel theme): They that were full have hired out themselves for bread; and they that were hungry ceased: so that the barren hath born seven; and she that hath many children is waxed feeble.

**1 Timothy 5:5** (Parallel theme): Now she that is a widow indeed, and desolate, trusteth in God, and continueth in supplications and prayers night and day.

**Isaiah 49:21** (Parallel theme): Then shalt thou say in thine heart, Who hath begotten me these, seeing I have lost my children, and am desolate, a captive, and removing to and fro? and who hath brought up these? Behold, I was left alone; these, where had they been?

**2 Samuel 13:20** (Parallel theme): And Absalom her brother said unto her, Hath Amnon thy brother been with thee? but hold now thy peace, my sister: he is thy brother; regard not this thing. So Tamar remained desolate in her brother Absalom's house.

