

Galatians 4:30

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

Nevertheless what saith the scripture? Cast out the bondwoman and her son: for the son of the bondwoman shall not be heir with the son of the freewoman.

Analysis

Nevertheless what saith the scripture? Cast out the bondwoman and her son: for the son of the bondwoman shall not be heir with the son of the freewoman. Paul quotes Genesis 21:10 (Sarah's demand). "Nevertheless what saith the scripture?" (alla ti legei hē graphē, ἀλλὰ τί λέγει ἡ γραφή)—despite persecution, what's Scripture's verdict? "Cast out the bondwoman and her son" (ekbale tēn paidiskēn kai ton huion autēs, ἐκβαλε τὴν παιδίσκην καὶ τὸν υἱὸν αὐτῆς)—expel, drive out Hagar and Ishmael. This seems harsh, but it's God's command (Genesis 21:12).

"For the son of the bondwoman shall not be heir with the son of the freewoman" (ou gar mē klēronomēsei ho huios tēs paidiskēs meta tou huiou tēs eleutherās)—Ishmael will not share Isaac's inheritance. The double negative ou mē (οὐ μή) is emphatic: absolutely not! Applying allegorically: law and grace can't coexist as means of inheritance. One must be cast out. You can't mix flesh and Spirit, works and faith, law and grace. The Galatians must choose: cast out the law-covenant (bondwoman) or lose the promise-covenant (freewoman). Trying to keep both means losing both. Paul demands decisive rejection of law-righteousness.

Historical Context

Sarah's demand seemed cruel, but God confirmed it because Ishmael threatened Isaac's unique status as heir. Allegorically, law-observance threatens the gospel.

The Judaizers wanted both: faith in Christ plus circumcision and law-keeping. Paul insists this corrupts the gospel entirely (1:6-9, 5:2-4). No mixing allowed. This uncompromising stance characterized early church struggles: Christianity must decisively break from law-based righteousness while still honoring the Old Testament as Scripture. The new covenant replaces the old as means of relationship with God.

Related Passages

John 15:13 — Greatest form of love

1 John 4:8 — God is love

Colossians 1:16 — All things created through Christ

Psalms 19:1 — Heavens declare God's glory

Study Questions

1. What 'bondwoman' elements (law-works, religious performance as grounds for acceptance) do you need to 'cast out' decisively from your relationship with God?
2. Why is mixing grace and works so dangerous that Paul demands complete expulsion of the law-principle?
3. How do you recognize when you're trying to be an heir both 'through the bondwoman' (law) and 'through the freewoman' (promise)?

Interlinear Text

ἀλλὰ	τί	λέγει	ἡ	γραφὴ;	Ἐκβαλε	τὴν	
Nevertheless	what	saith	G3588	the scripture	Cast out	G3588	
G235	G5101	G3004		G1124	G1544		
παιδίσκης	καὶ	τὸν	υἱοῦ	αὐτῆς·	οὐ	γὰρ	μὴ
of the bondwoman	and	G3588	son	her	G3756	for	G3361
G3814	G2532		G5207	G846		G1063	
κληρονομήση	ὁ	υἱοῦ	τῆς	παιδίσκης	μετὰ	τοῦ	υἱοῦ
be heir	G3588	son	G3588	of the bondwoman	with	G3588	son
G2816		G5207		G3814	G3326		G5207
τῆς	ἐλευθέρας						
G3588	of the freewoman						
	G1658						

Additional Cross-References

John 8:35 (Parallel theme): And the servant abideth not in the house for ever: but the Son abideth ever.