

**LESSON 10:** "A Tale of Two Sons"

**Date:** November 23, 2014

**TEXT:** Galatians 4:21-5:1

## INTRODUCTION

**Illustration:** Have you ever gotten yourself into something—a job, a big purchase, a vacation rental, a “free” prize, etc.—without realizing exactly what you had gotten yourself into? It seems to me that “fine print” exists for the sole reason of creating those kinds of embarrassing, frustrating, or damaging situations.

A similar problem had befallen the infant churches in Galatia. Having abandoned grace for the Law, they really didn’t know exactly what they had gotten themselves into. This is why Paul asks them in Galatians 4:21, “Tell me, you who desire to be under the Law, do you not listen to the Law [or, hear what the Law says]?” They were missing the “fine print,” although it should’ve been obvious. The Lord hadn’t been the one to reduce the font size on the realities of living by the Law; the deceptive, trouble-making Judaizers had (cf. 1:7; 3:1a; 4:17).

As we already saw in Galatians 3:10-12, the Law was quite clear about its standard of perfection and penalty of accursed condemnation. Furthermore, Paul demonstrated the Law’s purpose by showing its contrast with the promise, its character as a temporary guardian, and its completion in Christ (3:17, 19-25; 4:1-5). In opposition to these truths, the Judaizers were undermining Paul’s authority over the Galatians and the Galatians’ appreciation for Paul (4:8-20), so that they might re-capture the Galatians’ believers with the bondage of relating to God through adherence to the Law. And in following these new spiritual leaders, the Galatian Christians didn’t really know what they had gotten themselves into.

To help educate them, Paul provides a summary section to his long list of preceding arguments<sup>1</sup> in which he provides them with some “fine print” so that they might know exactly what returning to the Law entailed. This final argument from the Pentateuch itself (i.e., the Law section of the Old Testament) deals with the example of two sons (4:21-31). Paul shares a literal story and uses it as an illustration to climax his defense of the superiority and sufficiency of the gospel of grace alone through faith alone.

In this lesson, we will trace Paul’s final argument, “listen to [what] the Law [says],” consider the inspired “fine print” of Paul’s illustration in this passage — and be convinced again that grace is better than the Law, and faith is better than works!

## THE HISTORICAL FACTS (4:22-23)

Paul gives us a short history lesson in verses 22-23, writing, “For it is written that Abraham had two sons, one by a slave woman and one by a free woman. But the son of the slave was born according to the flesh, while the son of the free woman was born through promise.” Paul’s reference to Abraham to prove his and not the Judaizers’ point was particularly powerful.

*It was in their racial descent from him that most Jews of Paul’s day placed their trust for salvation. But as John the Baptist had declared to the Pharisees and Sadducees, for Jews to say, “we have Abraham for our father,” did not make them right with God, who “is able from these stones to raise up children to Abraham” (Matt. 3:9). Jesus told another group of unbelieving Jews that being the physical descendants of Abraham not only did not make them children of God but did not prevent them from being children of Satan, just like Gentile unbelievers (John 8:33-44).<sup>2</sup>*

In this passage, Paul’s focus is on “two sons” of Abraham.

### 1. ***Ishmael***

Two historical facts are highlighted about this son. First, Ishmael’s mother, Hagar, was an Egyptian slave (v. 22) belonging to Sarah (Genesis 16:1), and therefore her son was, too. Second, Ishmael was born “according to the flesh” or by natural conception (v. 23). When God’s promise of a son didn’t appear to be happening for the barren and elderly Sarah, she offered her slave, Hagar, to Abraham in order to “obtain children by her” (Genesis 16:2). Genesis 16:2-4, 15 reads, “Abram listened to the voice of Sarai. ... And he went in to Hagar, and she conceived. ... And Hagar bore Abram a son, and Abram called the name of his son, whom Hagar bore, Ishmael.” The use of the word “flesh” in our passage also serves to stress the fact that “the scheme for his conception...was motivated by purely selfish desires and fulfilled by purely human means [i.e., conniving].”<sup>3</sup>

## 2. Isaac

Paul underlines two contrasting facts about the other son. First, Isaac's mother was a "free woman" (v. 22). and so he was free, too. Second, Isaac was born "through promise" (v. 23) or "according to the Spirit" (v. 29). This emphasizes the supernatural nature of the birth, for God enabled Abraham and Sarah to bear a son in their old age when childbearing years had long ago passed by (Genesis 17:17; 18:11-12; 21:1-7). As Hebrews 11:11-12 puts it, "Sarah herself received power to conceive, even when she was past the age ... [and] from one man, and him as good as dead" a promised son was born. Furthermore, "promise" is in contrast to "flesh" in that the latter characterized Abraham's and Sarah's human efforts to accomplish God's will, whereas the former was working independently of their success or failures. Abraham and Sarah had no bearing upon the promise, except being the recipient—the promise was the promise whether they believed it or not and whether they waited for it or not. The promise was all of God's grace!

Pulling from the Law and from Father Abraham, Paul has merely shared a tale of two sons—one was born a slave, the other was free; one was born naturally by human effort, the other was born spiritually through a divine promise. These are literal and historical facts recorded in Genesis 12-21, but used illustratively, this striking dichotomy between the two sons forms a foundation for the final powerful argument that Paul is about to make.

**Transition:** Turning our attention to verses 24-27, let's trace how Paul uses this tale of two sons to illustrate a more important contrast between people even today.

### THE ILLUSTRATIVE INTERPRETATION (4:24-27)

At this point, we must pause a moment to consider the word "allegorically" and its harmful implications if not properly understood. One commentator explains,

*The translators of both the King James Version and the New American Standard Bible have chosen simply to transliterate rather than translate the term allēgoreō (allegorically, v. 24). This has led to difficulty in handling the passage, because usually an allegory is either a fanciful or fictional story carrying a hidden meaning or a true story in which the apparent meaning is meaningless.<sup>4</sup>*

Ancient Bible teachers like Origen, Augustine, and others often practiced an "allegorical interpretation" in their Bible study. In this form of Bible study, "the historical facts are relegated to a lower, less significant level and fanciful, hidden meanings unrelated to the text, are considered vastly more important."<sup>5</sup>

The problems with this particular method are obvious and dangerous, and two are most notable. First, it gives man authority over the Scripture itself. In essence, God's Word can mean whatever I think it means, and that understood meaning can change from one person's unique interpretation to another. One's "take" on God's Word is more interesting and important than any inherent meaning in a particular text, and that figurative interpretation may be easily cast aside by another more clever one. That leads to a second notable problem with "allegorical or figurative interpretation"—it robs us of any confidence in knowing truth. If man's fanciful interpretation becomes the authority, and if that interpretation can be easily replaced by a more fanciful one, then "truth" becomes terribly elusive. We no longer have the objective and unequivocal "thus saith the Lord" with which to guide our behavior and belief. MacArthur elaborates of the dangers of "allegorizing" or "spiritualizing" in our Bible study:

*Allegory as such is a tenuous and dangerous means of interpretation. Because allegory does not need to be based on fact, it is limited only by an interpreter's imagination and is easily influenced by his personal predispositions. It frequently leads to biased and often bizarre conclusions. ...*

*Allegory is a Pandora's box that ignores the literal, historical meaning of Scripture and opens biblical interpretation to every extreme. Because of man's finiteness and fallenness, it inevitably leads to arbitrariness, absurdity, and futility.<sup>6</sup>*

This method, then, with all its dangers is not what Paul is employing in this passage. Instead, he is treating the original story with integrity, accepting its literal historical nature, but then using it to illustrate a point he is making here. Again, MacArthur explains:

*Obviously the record of Abraham, Sarah, and Hagar is both historical and meaningful. Recognizing this, the New International Version translators have attempted to aid the understanding of what Paul intended by avoiding the term allegorical and rendering "These*

*things may be taken figuratively.” But that also can have the implication of something that is not literal. It is best to identify this literal, historical account as simply analogous to and illustrative of the spiritual truth that Paul elucidates with it. The dictionary defines analogy as “a partial similarity between like features of two things on which a comparison may be made.” Paul is simply comparing the similarities between the story of Abraham and the spiritual truth he is teaching, and this interpretation is consistent with the meaning of allēgoreō.<sup>7</sup>*

For our purposes in this lesson, to avoid confusion, we’ll use the description “illustration” rather than “allegory” to describe Paul’s use of the Genesis story.

It is also worth noting at this point that, even used properly, this is a somewhat inferior manner of arguing in comparison with his tight logical defense previously. Why, then, would Paul choose to climax his gospel guardianship with an allegorical illustration? Boice offers some fascinating insight into the wisdom of Paul to conclude this way:

*One may just as well feel that Paul has deliberately saved precisely this argument for his capstone. The advantages are these: (1) The allegory allows Paul to end on a final citation of the law and, in particular, on a passage involving Abraham, who has been his primary example; (2) it allows him to use a method of argument which, we may assume, had been used by the legalizers, thus turning their own style of exegesis against them; (3) it illustrates and reviews all his main points—the radical opposition between the principle of law and the principle of faith, the fact that life under law is a life of bondage and the life of faith is freedom, that the life of faith is a result of the supernatural working of God by means of the Holy Spirit; (4) the story contains an emotional overtone suited both to a wrap-up of the formal argument and to a final personal appeal; and (5) it gives Paul a base upon which to suggest what he had undoubtedly thought but had apparently been reluctant to say previously—that the Galatians should obey God by casting out the legalizers (v. 30). Therefore, the allegory effectively ties together both the doctrinal section of the letter and the appeal based on it, while at the same time leading into the ethical section that begins in chapter 5.<sup>8</sup>*

So, understanding what Paul means by “this may be interpreted allegorically,” let’s consider now the actual point Paul is making by using

this illustration of two women and two sons. One author summarizes that point this way:

*It is apparent that this contrast [between the two sons] lends itself well to the very distinction Paul is trying to make between natural or man-made and supernatural or God-made religion. The religion of works and law corresponds to the natural birth of Ishmael. The religion of the Spirit, which is Christianity, corresponds to the supernatural birth of Isaac.<sup>9</sup>*

This fundamental distinction is fleshed out with two further contrasts.

**1. Contrast #1 — Hagar represents the Mosaic Covenant whereas Sarah represents the Abrahamic Covenant (vv. 24-25a).**

Paul writes, “These women are two covenants. One is from Mount Sinai, bearing children for slavery; she is Hagar. Now Hagar is Mount Sinai in Arabia” (vv. 24-25a).

The first point in his illustration is that the two women represent<sup>10</sup> “two covenants”—the Mosaic Covenant and the Abrahamic Covenant. The importance of these two covenants in Biblical history cannot be overstated.

*An understanding of the Bible is impossible without an understanding of the two covenants. After all, our Bibles are divided in half, into the Old and New Testaments, meaning the Old and New ‘Covenants’. A covenant is a solemn agreement between God and men, by which He makes them His people and promises to be their God. God established the old covenant through Moses and the new covenant through Christ, whose blood ratified it. The old (Mosaic) covenant was based on law; but the new (Christian) covenant, fore-shadowed through Abraham and foretold through Jeremiah, is based on promises. In the law God laid the responsibility on men and said ‘thou shalt ..., thou shalt not ...’; but in the promise God keeps the responsibility Himself and says ‘I will ..., I will ...’.<sup>11</sup>*

In our passage, Paul draws an analogy between Hagar and her position of physical bondage and Mount Sinai and its covenant of spiritual bondage (i.e., the Mosaic Covenant).<sup>12</sup> The contrasting analogy is between Sarah and her physical freedom and God’s promises to Abraham of mere grace and faith (i.e., the Abrahamic

Covenant). This contrast between covenants has already been explored in some depth in Galatians 3:15-29 (Lessons 7-8), but it can be summarized in a statement—the Mosaic Covenant produced spiritual slaves (cf. 3:21-24), whereas the Abrahamic Covenant promised spiritual sonship (cf. 3:15-20, 25-29).

The Old Covenant given at “Mount Sinai in Arabia” (which was outside God’s promised land) demanded obedience to God’s covenantal commands, an obedience that was humanly impossible, resulting in bondage to sin and the curse of the Law (cf. 3:10-12). “Anyone, including a Jew, who attempted to satisfy God and gain freedom from condemnation by trying to live up to that covenant in his own self-righteousness was spiritually like a child of Hagar, the bondswoman [who was ‘bearing children for slavery’]. He was a slave, struggling for a freedom he could not obtain by his own efforts.”<sup>13</sup>

In contrast, God established a covenant with Abraham (represented here by Sarah) on the basis of divine promise alone. The sleeping Abraham had not part in the ratification ceremony (Genesis 15), for God was unilaterally covenanting with Abraham in grace alone. Under this covenant with its messianic implications, Abraham’s children would be spiritually free and heirs in God’s family (cf. Galatians 4:1-7).

## **2. Contrast #2 — Hagar represents earthly Jerusalem whereas Sarah represents heavenly Jerusalem (vv. 25-27).**

Paul next writes, “Now Hagar...corresponds to the present Jerusalem, for she is in slavery with her children. But the Jerusalem above is free, and she is our mother” (vv. 25-26).

“Hagar...corresponds to” or represents the “present Jerusalem” of Paul’s day, which was indeed “in slavery with her children.” On the one hand, the Israelites were in subjugation to Roman rule. On the other hand, a far more serious bondage was their ongoing enslavement to the Law, which was powerless to save and could only condemn. In contrast to Arabia, Jerusalem was the very capital of this privileged nation, and yet it was in the same kind of spiritual blindness and slavery. Jesus Christ, the Passover Lamb promised and pictured throughout the Old Testament, had fulfilled the shadow of the Old Covenant in His life and death and had inaugurated the New Covenant in Jerusalem (cf. Matthew 26:26-29; Mark 14:22–25; Luke 22:18-20; 1 Corinthians 11:23-25); yet the “weak and worthless” (cf.

4:8-9) activity and ceremony of the Law continued on the Temple Mount in Jerusalem into Paul’s day and beyond. So, those of “the circumcision party” who came “from James” in Jerusalem back in Galatians 2:12 and who created such problems for Peter, Barnabas, and the rest of the church in Antioch (Galatians 2:13) were no more than the blind leading the blind, the enslaved guiding the enslaved.

In contrast to the earthly Jerusalem symbolized by Hagar’s servitude was the “Jerusalem above” typified by Sarah. The citizens of this heavenly Jerusalem are “free” because Sarah is their “mother” by promise (i.e., grace) and through faith. Opposite those enslaved in Judaism (and any other man-made, Hagar-like religion), are Christians “born from above” (John 3:3), whose “citizenship is in heaven” (Philippians 3:20) and who are already “seated...with [Christ] in the heavenly places” (Ephesians 2:6). Heavenly Jerusalem is found and inhabited only through faith like that of Abraham who “was looking forward to the city that has foundations, whose designer and builder is God” (Hebrews 11:10). As Hebrews 12:18, 22 puts it, “You have not come to what may be touched, a blazing fire and darkness and gloom and a tempest [i.e., Mount Sinai] ... But you have come to Mount Zion and to the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem.” While there are yet future aspects of this “Jerusalem above” to be enjoyed (cf. Revelation 21-22), it can be surely and eternally entered into now by grace through faith.

In verse 27, Paul quotes Isaiah 54:1, which references Israel before, during, and after the captivity, and applies it to Hagar and Sarah. “For it is written,” Paul records, “‘Rejoice, O barren one who does not bear; break forth and cry aloud, you who are not in labor! For the children of the desolate one will be more than those of the one who has a husband.’”

Initially, this prophecy was meant to cheer the Jewish exiles with the prospect that their captivity would be reversed, like a barren and husbandless woman who rejoiced to see her fortune changed and her house filled with children. Paul sees in that prophecy a parallel to Sarah’s actual barrenness, a parallel that Isaiah was perhaps even drawing from himself (cf. Isaiah 51:2). Although initially “barren” and “desolate,” Sarah ended up having far “more” children than her rival, for her children are those who put their faith in the Messiah’s gracious salvation (cf. Isaiah 53:10-12, the verses

**THE PRACTICAL APPLICATION (4:28-5:1)**

that immediately precede Isaiah 54:1). So, whether for Israel in its captivity or Sarah in her infertility, the power was in God’s gracious promise.<sup>14</sup> Ironically, then, Hagar is actually the barren one, unable to provide any of her children with spiritual and eternal freedom.

**Application:** The word “corresponds” in verse 25 was originally used of soldiers who stood in a line, and so it came to be used of categories and lists.<sup>15</sup> So, Paul has in mind that we will have been categorizing the contrasts in this analogy of two women, this tale of two sons.

<b>Hagar &amp; Ishmael</b>	<b>Sarah &amp; Isaac</b>
Slavery and captivity	Freedom and family
Born “according to the flesh”	Born “through promise” and “according to the Spirit”
Mosaic Covenant	Abrahamic Covenant
Law and works	Grace and faith
Earthly Jerusalem	Heavenly Jerusalem
Man-made religion (Judaism)	God-made religion (Christianity)

Paul’s purpose in this concluding and climactic argument is to help us really understand the issues at stake here, to help us know exactly what we’re getting ourselves into if we “desire to be under the Law.” He wants us to “listen” to what the Law actually says both explicitly (in his previous arguments) and illustratively (in this passage), and he wants us to make sure that we are evaluating ourselves on the right basis and that we are asking ourselves the right question.

*It is not enough merely to claim Abraham as one’s father. Both Christians [spiritually] and Jews [physically] did that. The question is: Who is our mother and in what way were we born? If Hagar is our mother, then we were born of purely human means and are still slaves. If our mother is Sarah, then the birth was by promise, and we are free men.<sup>16</sup>*

**Transition:** That question, then, brings us to the conclusion of Paul’s illustration in which he makes practical application to the lives of true gospel-believing Christians.

Paul provides four concluding points of application.

**1. Believers, not Law-observers, are the true children of God (4:28-31).**

Christians are analogous to Isaac, not Ishmael, in that (1) we are “children of promise” (v. 28) who rely in faith upon the gracious assurances of the New Covenant independent of our own effort, (2) we were “born according to the Spirit” from above (v. 29b; cf. Galatians 3:27; 4:6) and not according to the weakness of human flesh, (3) we “are not children of the slave but of the free woman” (v. 31); and (4) we alone will receive the “inheritance” promised to God’s children (v. 30b).

Galatians 3:29 put it this way: “And if you are Christ’s, then you are Abraham’s offspring, heirs according to promise.” Jesus added His assurance in John 8:34-36, “Truly, truly, I say to you, everyone who practices sin is a slave to sin. The slave does not remain in the house forever; the son remains forever. So if the Son sets you free, you will be free indeed.”

In a similar passage in Romans 9:7-8, Paul echoes this first conclusion: “And not all are children of Abraham because they are his offspring, but ‘Through Isaac shall your offspring be named.’ This means that it is not the children of the flesh who are the children of God, but the children of the promise are counted as offspring.”

**2. Believers will be persecuted by Law-observers (4:29).**

Just as Ishmael “persecuted” Isaac (cf. Genesis 21:9), so those who relate to God on the basis of the “flesh” will even “now” oppose those who come to God through the “Spirit.” The self-righteous have little time for the apparent “weakness,” “foolishness,” and narrow-mindedness of those who cling to the cross (cf. 1 Corinthians 1:18-31), and so they persecute that way. They allow dozens of man-made ways to God, but refuse to tolerate the “exclusive” and “intolerant” way of grace and faith alone. And even within the local church, legalists bind up the lavishness of grace with their fetters of man-made standards, harassing any who aren’t measuring up. Yes, Paul knew better than anyone how oppressive legalism could be, for Paul, the Law-observing persecutor, had become the gospel-loving persecuted.

### 3. **Believers should reject the Law-observers (4:30).**

In verse 30, Paul quotes Genesis 21:10, a verse that the Judaizers had “undoubtedly interpreted as a statement of...God’s rejection of the Gentiles,”<sup>17</sup> and flips it to show God’s rejection of the legalistic Judaizers. In continuing the illustration this far, Paul insinuates that “Christians are to reject both legalism and those who teach it.”<sup>18</sup> We must be aware of those who would “trouble [us] and want to distort the gospel of Christ” (Galatians 1:7), we must commit ourselves to activating God’s curse upon those who preach another gospel (Galatians 1:8-9), and we must actively labor to “preserve” “the truth of the gospel” (Galatians 2:5), and we must stand against even those companions who are “not in step with the truth of the gospel” (Galatians 2:14). In short, we must do what Paul has modeled for us in Parts 1 and 2 of this vigorous epistle—we must prioritize and protect the true gospel of grace alone through faith alone.

### 4. **Believers should stand firm in spiritual freedom (5:1).**

Finally, Paul writes in Galatians 5:1, “For freedom Christ has set us free; stand firm therefore, and do not submit again to a yoke of slavery.” God’s purpose in redeeming us was our “freedom” (the Greek root word is used 2x in v. 1), and in the last two chapters of this letter, Paul will practically educate us on how to “stand firm” in that Christ-accomplished, grace-provided, Law-releasing freedom. For now, let us understand what is at stake, and commit ourselves afresh to enjoying the gracious privilege of being God’s children through His work alone. “You and I need to beware lest Ishmael and Hagar have crept back into our lives. If they have—let us cast them out.”<sup>19</sup>

## CONCLUSION

Up to this point in Paul’s letter, no fewer than nine arguments have been presented in defense of justification by faith alone through grace alone. If you have been following Paul’s reasoning, you now know exactly what you are getting yourself into if you return to a religion of works and Law. There is only bondage there, but “for freedom Christ has set [us] free”! Indeed, grace and faith are better than works and the Law.



**Discussion:** Share testimonies of what you have learned about grace, faith, and the true gospel in Galatians 1-4. Perhaps you have been impacted by Paul’s commitment to the gospel’s integrity, or maybe you have been blessed by the incredibly gracious nature of the gospel. “Stand firm” in the freedom of grace by corporately testifying and praising God!

## ENDNOTES

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<sup>1</sup> These arguments have been:

- the encounter between apostles (2:11-21)
- the experience of the Galatians (3:1-5)
- the explanation about Abraham (3:6-9)
- the expiation of Jesus Christ (3:10-14)
- the establishment of the Covenant (3:15-18)
- the essence of the Law (3:19-22)
- the excellence of faith (3:23-4:7)
- the endearment of Paul (4:8-20)
- the example of two sons (4:21-31)

<sup>2</sup> John F. MacArthur Jr., *Galatians*, MacArthur New Testament Commentary (Chicago: Moody Press, 1983), 123–124.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*, 124.

<sup>4</sup> *Ibid.*, 122.

<sup>5</sup> Donald K. Campbell, “Galatians,” in *The Bible Knowledge Commentary: An Exposition of the Scriptures*, ed. J. F. Walvoord and R. B. Zuck, vol. 2 (Wheaton, IL: Victor Books, 1985), 604.

<sup>6</sup> MacArthur, 122-123.

<sup>7</sup> *Ibid.*, 122. Furthermore, he repeats, “Allegorically, the unfortunate transliteration taken from *allēgoreō*, is a compound of *allos* (other) and *agoreuō* (to speak in a place of assembly, that is, publicly), and means literally ‘to speak other than one seems to speak.’ It was used of a story that conveyed meaning other than what was apparent in the literal sense of the words. It has the idea of one thing being represented under the image of another. In this case, the spiritual truth is illustrated by the historical story, and translating ‘analogically’ is consistent with the basic meaning of the Greek” (125).

<sup>8</sup> James Montgomery Boice, “Galatians,” in *The Expositor’s Bible Commentary: Romans through Galatians*, ed. Frank E. Gaebelin, vol. 10 (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan Publishing House, 1976), 482.

<sup>9</sup> *Ibid.*, 483.

<sup>10</sup> For a similar use of the Greek word “are” are “represents,” see Matthew 26:26.

<sup>11</sup> John R. W. Stott, *The Message of Galatians: Only One Way*, The Bible Speaks Today (Leicester, England; Downer’s Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 1986), 124.

<sup>12</sup> “The descendants of Hagar through Ishmael eventually moved into the desert areas to the east and south of the Promised Land. They came to be known broadly as Arabs and their territory as Arabia, and it is significant that Mount Sinai is located in what is still known today as the Arabian Peninsula. It was between the sons of Hagar and Sarah that the modern Arab-Israeli animosity began some 4,000 years ago, producing a continual conflict between two peoples who both trace their lineage from Abraham” (MacArthur, 125).

<sup>13</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>14</sup> As Zion was a mother of children by grace after captivity, so believers will multiply in grace in the heavenly Jerusalem, which was also figuratively barren for a long time. “The general assembly and church of the first-born” (Heb. 12:23) was not occupied until Jesus was crucified and resurrected, taking captivity captive and removing the spiritual barrenness that no human effort under the Old Covenant could remove. Heaven, the Jerusalem above, will continue to be populated with the born-from-above saints of God until every predestined believer has entered (*Ibid.*, 127).

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<sup>15</sup> William Arndt, Frederick W. Danker, and Walter Bauer, *A Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament and Other Early Christian Literature* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2000), 979.

<sup>16</sup> Boice, 484.

<sup>17</sup> *Ibid.*, 485.

<sup>18</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>19</sup> Warren W. Wiersbe, *The Bible Exposition Commentary*, vol. 1 (Wheaton, IL: Victor Books, 1996), 712.