

## The Birth of Isaac: A Lesson in the Covenant of Grace

Sunday, April 26/20 --- Genesis 21 and Galatians 4:21 – 5:1

*The Lord visited Sarah as He had said, and the Lord did to Sarah as He had promised. And Sarah conceived and bore Abraham a son in his old age at the time of which God had spoken to him.*

*Genesis 21:1 - 2*

*You brothers, like Isaac, are children of promise... not children of the slave but of the free woman. For freedom Christ has set us free; stand firm therefore, and do not submit again to a yoke of slavery.*

*Galatians 4:28, 5:1*

### Introduction:

The Bible is divided into the Old and New Testaments (Covenants). The difference between the Old Covenant and the New Covenant established in Christ, however, is radical. As we study the events surrounding the OT story of Isaac's birth, we see the Apostle Paul use it as a perfect opportunity to demonstrate the beauty of freedom in Christ.

#### I. The Old Testament Story: Told through the Lens of Laughter (Gen. 17 – 21)

- Spontaneous laughter (17:17)
- Sarcastic laughter (18:12)
- Scornful Laughter (19:14)
- Shared Laughter (21:6)
- Sneering Laughter (21:9)

#### II. The New Testament Significance: Understood through Freedom in Christ (Gal. 4:21 – 5:1)

- Sons of different Mothers (4:21 – 23)
- Mothers of different Relationships (4:24 – 27)
- Births of a different Nature (4:28 – 31)
- Children who live in Freedom (5:1)

### Questions for Reflection and Discussion:

- Why did God have Abraham name his son 'Isaac'? What would it have meant to Isaac during his lifetime to be called 'he laughs'? How do you identify with the five kinds of laughter?
- How does the teaching of the New Testament gospel bring us freedom from slavery? What does it mean to be a slave to religion?
- How does this story teach us to put faith in God and not rely on ourselves? How do we know that the Law cannot save us, only Christ can?