

All Mankind in their Natural Condition

But he *who* was of the bondwoman was born after the flesh; but he of the freewoman was by promise. (Galatians 4:23)

And here the case is very plain that the children of the bond-woman, are all that are *born after the flesh* (ver. 23.) that is, all mankind in their natural condition.

But should any say that *Ismael's* being born after the flesh, intends an unlawful birth, his mother not being *Abraham's* lawful wife: I answer no, by no means, for then he would have been a bastard, and such an one must not come into the congregation of the Lord, *Deut.* 23.—but he was circumcised and admitted to outward privileges as well as *Isaac*.

This objection might as well be laid against four of *Jacob's* sons, as against this, their mothers being maids or handmaids before; yet they are ever reckoned to make up the twelve tribes of God's *Israel*. But it is evident beyond dispute, that his being born after the flesh, does not intend a being *illegitimate*, but only that he had no other than a natural birth: he was never *born again*, without which none can enter into the kingdom of God.

And so now all who have only a natural birth are children of the bond-woman. *Paul* says of himself, and other saints,—*We are by nature, children of wrath, even as others.* Eph. ii. 3. And he tells the *Romans*, that he had proved both *Jews* and *Gentiles*, that they are all under sin, *Rom.* iii. 9.—*Jews, Pharisees*, and all the world are guilty before God, ver, 19.

(A Short Description of the Difference Between the *Bond-Woman* and the *Free*, As they are the Two Covenants... 2nd Edition by Isaac Backus, Boston: Edes and Gill, e-book, MDCCLXX, 8, Text and paragraph structure modified)