

THE ALMIGHTY

GENESIS 17

Text: Genesis 17:1

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¹ And when Abram was ninety years old and nine, the LORD appeared to Abram, and said unto him, I *am* the Almighty God; walk before me, and be thou perfect.

Introduction:

Some fourteen years had passed since God last spoke to Abraham. Not since his disobedience in the matter of Hagar had Abraham heard the voice of God. The times of His silence are most devastating when they come our way. We need to learn that our disobedience almost always brings His silence.

In this passage, the Lord speaks again. When He does it is to reveal even more of the details of His covenant with Abram. Here we have the opportunity to learn more about the faithfulness and work of God in the lives of His people.

Notice:

1. A NEW REVELATION (vs. 1-5)

Genesis 17:1-5

¹ And when Abram was ninety years old and nine, the LORD appeared to Abram, and said unto him, I *am* the Almighty God; walk before me, and be thou perfect. ² And I will make my covenant between me and thee, and will multiply thee exceedingly. ³ And Abram fell on his face: and God talked with him, saying, ⁴ As for me, behold, my covenant *is* with thee, and thou shalt be a father of many nations. ⁵ Neither shall thy name any more be called Abram, but thy name shall be Abraham; for a father of many nations have I made thee.

A. A Revelation of His Person (vs. 1)

For the first time, God reveals Himself as "the Almighty God". This name is from the Hebrew name "El-Shaddai". It carries the idea of "Nourisher; Strengthener; Satisfier." It identifies God as being the "All-sufficient One".

B. A Revelation of His Promise (vs. 2-4)

God simply reminds Abram of the promises He has made to him in the past. God will make of him a great nation and He will bless Abram.

God's revelation and reminder cause Abram to fall at His feet in worship! Would to God the Lord's people would see His blessings as a reason to worship and praise Him.

Note: v. 4 "As for me" indicates that this covenant depends on God and not man!

C. A Revelation of His Plan (vs. 5)

Here, Abram receives a name change. His name is changed from "Abram", which means "Exalted Father", to "Abraham" which means "Father Of A Multitude".

2. A NEW REASSURANCE (VS. 6-8; 15-22)

A. Concerning His Fruitfulness (vs. 6)

Genesis 17:6

⁶And I will make thee exceeding fruitful, and I will make nations of thee, and kings shall come out of thee.

God promises Abraham Children, Crowds and Crowns. God promised him things that, at that moment in his life, he couldn't even imagine!

B. Concerning His Faithfulness (vs. 7-8)

Genesis 17:7-8

⁷And I will establish my covenant between me and thee and thy seed after thee in their generations for an everlasting covenant, to be a God unto thee, and to thy seed after thee. ⁸And I will give unto thee, and to thy seed after thee, the land wherein thou art a stranger, all the land of Canaan, for an everlasting possession; and I will be their God.

God promises not only to bless Abraham, but his children and all the generations of Abraham's seed as well.

Thank God that we can count on His faithfulness!

Lamentations 3:22-23

²² *It is of the LORD'S mercies that we are not consumed, because his compassions fail not.* ²³ *They are new every morning: great is thy faithfulness.*

C. Concerning His Future (vs. 15-22)

Genesis 17:15-22

¹⁵ And God said unto Abraham, As for Sarai thy wife, thou shalt not call her name Sarai, but Sarah *shall* her name *be*. ¹⁶ And I will bless her, and give thee a son also of her: yea, I will bless her, and she shall be *a mother* of nations; kings of people shall be of her. ¹⁷ Then Abraham fell upon his face, and laughed, and said in his heart, Shall *a child* be born unto him that is an hundred years old? and shall Sarah, that is ninety years old, bear? ¹⁸ And Abraham said unto God, O that Ishmael might live before thee! ¹⁹ And God said, Sarah thy wife shall bear thee a son indeed; and thou shalt call his name Isaac: and I will establish my covenant with him for an everlasting covenant, *and* with his seed after him. ²⁰ And as for Ishmael, I have heard thee: Behold, I have blessed him, and will make him fruitful, and will multiply him exceedingly; twelve princes shall he beget, and I will make him a great nation. ²¹ But my covenant will I establish with Isaac, which Sarah shall bear unto thee at this set time in the next year. ²² And he left off talking with him, and God went up from Abraham.

God's promise to Abraham is extended to Sarai also. She is to have this child of promise and she is to be the mother of multitudes.

When Abraham hears this he laughs. It is not a laugh of doubt, but of joy at what the Lord is about to do in his life. He is so excited thinking about the power of God that he prays for God to bless Ishmael also. This prayer is heard and answered by the Lord!

Here is a man who was looking at a bleak future when the day began. Now he is thrilled by the possibilities. I just want to remind us this evening that no cause is hopeless when it involves the Lord.

Your future is as bright as the size of your faith!

When we involve God in the situations of our lives, the impossible becomes immediately possible.

Remember the God we serve holds today and tomorrow in His hands, and He is greater than both!

3. A NEW REQUIREMENT (vs. 9-14; 23-27)

A. The Nature of this Requirement (vs. 9-11)

Genesis 17:9-11

⁹And God said unto Abraham, Thou shalt keep my covenant therefore, thou, and thy seed after thee in their generations. ¹⁰This *is* my covenant, which ye shall keep, between me and you

and thy seed after thee; Every man child among you shall be circumcised. ¹¹ And ye shall circumcise the flesh of your foreskin; and it shall be a token of the covenant betwixt me and you.

Here, Abraham and all his descendants are required to be circumcised. They were to be identified as followers of the Lord by a mark in their bodies.

This mark was both painful and private. Whether anyone else knew of it or not, the person circumcised and the Lord knew about it.

B. The Nationality of this Requirement (vs. 12-13)

Genesis 17:12-13

¹² And he that is eight days old shall be circumcised among you, every man child in your generations, he that is born in the house, or bought with money of any stranger, which *is* not of thy seed. ¹³ He that is born in thy house, and he that is bought with thy money, must needs be circumcised: and my covenant shall be in your flesh for an everlasting covenant.

Every male in the nation of Israel, whether they were young or old, bond or free were required to observe this rite, if they were to be allowed to be part of this covenant of promise. Without it, they were left out.

While physical circumcision is not required for a relationship with the Lord, spiritual circumcision is! Without it, no person can ever hope to enter the presence of God, or go to Heaven when they die.

John 3:3

³ Jesus answered and said unto him, Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God.

John 14:6

⁶ Jesus saith unto him, I am the way, the truth, and the life: no man cometh unto the Father, but by me.

C. The Necessity of this Requirement (vs. 14; 23-27)

Genesis 17:14

¹⁴ And the uncircumcised man child whose flesh of his foreskin is not circumcised, that soul shall be cut off from his people; he hath broken my covenant.

Genesis 17:23-27

²³ And Abraham took Ishmael his son, and all that were born in his house, and all that were bought with his money, every male among the men of Abraham's house; and circumcised the flesh of their foreskin in the selfsame day, as God had said unto him. ²⁴ And Abraham *was* ninety years old and nine, when he was circumcised in the flesh of his foreskin. ²⁵ And Ishmael his son *was* thirteen years old, when he was circumcised in the flesh of his foreskin. ²⁶ In the selfsame day was Abraham circumcised, and Ishmael his son. ²⁷ And all the men of his house, born in the house, and bought with money of the stranger, were circumcised with him.

Without being circumcised, no one could enter into this covenant relationship with the Lord. They were to be cut off from the people. They were out of the covenant.

Many in our day think that rituals are still how one approaches God. Nothing could be farther from the truth! Works can never save the soul, Eph. 2:8-9! It takes faith to please God, always has and always will, Heb. 11:6! It took faith to follow God and carry out this command, which Abraham did without hesitation, v. 23-27!

Close:

I am thankful this evening that we serve a God Who is interested in His people. I am thankful that when we exercise minute faith in His Word, that He honors that with blessings which cannot be calculated for value. I wonder, what are you trusting Him for?

What He has promised that will He do!