

GENESIS 17: THREE PRONOUNCEMENTS

I. OVERVIEW

- A. Thirteen years after Ishmael was born, God appeared to Abram
 - i. First time God spoke to Abram since Ishmael was born
 - a. What was going through his mind?
 - ii. Abram fell on his face “and God said” three times:
 - a. You will now be called Abraham
 - i. For you will be father of nations and kings
 - b. You will circumcise every male older than 8 days old as a sign of the covenant
 - i. This will continue for all generations
 - c. Your wife will now be called Sarah and she will bear a son called Isaac
 - i. My covenant will be with him and not Ishmael
 - ii. He will be born at this time next year
 - iii. Then Abraham circumcised himself and all other males in his household

II. GOD ALMIGHTY – V. 1

- A. El Shaddai – first time used in Scripture
 - i. Various interpretations (Guzik)
 - a. God who is sufficient
 - b. God who pours out blessings richly, abundantly, continually
 - c. Strength of man’s breast or comfort of woman’s breast
 - d. To display power
 - e. One who has His hand on everything¹

III. WALK BEFORE ME AND BE BLAMELESS – V. 1

- A. Just like Noah was blameless and walked with God (Genesis 6:9)
 - i. Be a voice of God’s rescue to a wicked generation
 - ii. Psalm 119:1 ***Blessed are those whose way is blameless, who walk in the law of the LORD!***
- B. It’s not the intense encounters with God that change us
 - i. It’s the every day faithfulness over years²

¹ Guzik, David. “Study Guide for Genesis 17.” *Blue Letter Bible*, 2018, www.blueletterbible.org/comm/guzik_david/study-guide/genesis/genesis-17.cfm. Accessed 25 May 2023.

² Guzik

IV. THAT I MAY MAKE MY COVENANT BETWEEN ME AND YOU – V. 2

- A. God hadn't forgotten His covenant with Abram

V. GOD ESCALATES THE COVENANT – V. 6

- A. I will make you *exceedingly* fruitful
- B. I will make you into *nations*
- C. *Kings* shall come from you

VI. EVERLASTING COVENANT – V. 7

- A. Without end
- B. Not dependent on what Abraham's offspring does
 - i. God will never reject Abraham's offspring
 - ii. Including the land

VII. THE SIGN OF THE COVENANT – CIRCUMCISION

- A. Related to reproductive organ – Abraham's seed
- B. Represents inherent impurity in flesh – must be cut off
 - i. If flesh isn't cut off, the whole person will be cut off from the covenant

VIII. EVERY MALE AMONG YOU SHALL BE CIRCUMCISED – V. 10

- A. First time Abraham must do something for covenant
- B. Descendants do it to enter into covenant by faith³

IX. SARAH – V. 15

- A. Proof that the covenant is for Jewish women, not just men⁴
- B. Sarai means *my princess*
 - i. Sarah means *princess*
 - a. Becomes all encompassing⁵

X. I WILL GIVE YOU A SON BY HER – V. 16

- A. No need to find a surrogate mother⁶

XI. YOU SHALL CALL HIS NAME ISAAC – V. 19

- A. Means laughter
- B. He is the covenant-bearer

³ Guzik

⁴ Armstrong, Stephen. "Genesis 2011 - Lesson 17B." *Verse by Verse Ministries International*, 31 Oct. 2011, versebyverseministry.org/lessons/genesis_2011_lesson_17b. Accessed 25 May 2023.

⁵ Guzik

⁶ Guzik

XII. I HAVE HEARD YOU – V. 20

- A. God heard Abraham's prayer for Ishmael and would bless him as well
 - i. But he won't bear the covenant
 - ii. He will obey command given in Eden
 - a. Be fruitful and multiply
 - b. But God will do it to him
 - i. "I will make him fruitful and multiply him"

XIII. EVERY MALE – V. 23

- A. Abraham's obedience was complete

XIV. THAT VERY DAY – V. 23

- A. Abraham's obedience was immediate

XV. POINTS TO JESUS

- A. Circumcision is connected to baptism
 - i. Both cut off sinful flesh
 - ii. Both are recognition of the covenant we receive by faith
 - iii. Colossians 2:11-12 ***In him also you were circumcised with a circumcision made without hands, by putting off the body of the flesh, by the circumcision of Christ, having been buried with him in baptism, in which you were also raised with him through faith in the powerful working of God, who raised him from the dead.***
 - iv. Baptism should not be refused by any follower of Jesus
 - a. To refuse it is to refuse the blessings of the New Covenant
 - b. Baptism doesn't save us but it is what cuts off the fleshly desires and opens us to the empowerment of Holy Spirit to resist sin
 - c. Very risky to refuse baptism

XVI. QUESTIONS FOR REFLECTION

- A. Why did God reveal a new name to Abram before giving him a commandment?

- B. Have you felt God hasn't spoken to you for an extended period of time? How has that made you feel? In what ways have you questioned God during those times?

- C. How have you responded when God has broken the silence after extended periods of not hearing from Him?

- D. How does faithfulness over years without encountering God change us?

- E. Why did God require circumcision to receive the covenant? Does circumcision save us? Are modern Christians required to circumcise their children?

- F. What is it now that cuts off our flesh? Does this save us?

- G. Is our obedience to God's commands immediate and complete? What keeps us from obeying God fully and without question?

XVII. FURTHER STUDY

- A. What does a name change indicate in Scripture? See Genesis 32:28; John 1:42; Revelation 2:17.

- B. How does Jesus' words in Matthew 5:43-48 connect to Noah and Abraham? What is Jesus implying here?

- C. What is the indication in this chapter that God's promise is not just for the Jews? See Romans 4:11-12.

- D. What was the physical ritual of circumcision supposed to reflect? See Jeremiah 4:4. How do we continue this practice in the New Covenant?

- E. What spiritual truth does being "cut off" in verse 14 point to? See Genesis 9:11; Daniel 9:26; Romans 9:3.
