

God's Constitution Genesis 17 "Abraham - the Father of our Faith"

Constitution Day // Covenant of God

WHAT ROLE DO WE PLAY IN - KZ Constit. - Opinion given, write it, read it, sign it?

WHAT ROLE DO WE PLAY IN THE PLAN OF SALVATION - OUR PART???

"the only thing we contribute to the plan of salvation, is the sin to make it necessary"

COVENANT OF GOD - 1) Grace - God's undeserved wonderful love

2) Eternal - SOLEMN PROMISE OF AN ETERNAL GOD

3) Unilateral - God alone sets the terms 12 x's in this Ch. God says, "I will"

Tit3:5 he saved us, not because of righteous things we had done, but because of his mercy

1. The Salvation for Abraham

SALVATION - election, adoption, regeneration justification, sanctification, glorification,

a. Passive - Justification vs. 3,17 15.6,12 Romans 4.1-5

v. 3 Abram fell facedown v. 17 Abraham fell facedown

ABE SPENT MOST OF HIS TIME THIS WAY DURING GOD'S MONOLOGUE

YEARS BEFORE WHEN GOD MADE THE COVENANT WITH ABE

Gen 15:12 Abram fell into a deep sleep ONLY GOD WALKED STREET OF BLOOD

Rom 4:2 If Abraham was justified by works, he had something to boast about--but not before God.

JUSTIFICATION - God make's Abe "just as if" he never sinned

Genesis 15:6 Abram believed the LORD, and he credited it to him as righteousness.

LEGAL DECLARATION - CREDITED AS RIGHTEOUS - NOT GUILTY

b. Participant - Regeneration v. 9 Rom 4.18-22 James 2.20-24

12 TIMES GOD SAYS "I will" - Now we must do something...

v. 4 God said to Abe "As for me, this is my covenant with you:

v. 9 Then God said to A. "As for you, you must keep my covenant,

LIFE OF FAITH IS NOT A SPECTATOR SPORT - we are actively involved

REGENERATION IS A NECESSARY PART OF OUR SALVATION

J 3:3 Jesus- "no one can see the kingdom of God unless he is born again."

THERE MUST BE A NEW BIRTH - NEW CREATION - MUST BE BORN AGAIN

IN JUSTIFICATION WE ARE PASSIVE - defendant stands motionless to hear verdict

IN REGENERATION WE ARE ACTIVE - new born baby squirms and cries

HOW TO KEEP PEOPLE IN CHURCH? GET THEM ACTIVELY INVOLVED
SIMPLY PUT - IF THEY ARE NOT SERVING, THEY WILL NOT STAY

FAITH IS LIKE A MUSCLE WHICH MUST BE EXERCISED OR ATROPHIED

Romans 4:18-22 Against all hope, Abraham in hope believed... {19} Without weakening in his faith, he faced the fact that his body was as good as dead--since he was about a hundred years old--and that Sarah's womb was also dead. {20} Yet he did not waver through unbelief regarding the promise of God, but was strengthened in his faith and gave glory to God, {21} being fully persuaded that God had power to do what he had promised. {22} This is why "it was credited to him as righteousness."

WE MUST WORK OUT OUR OWN SALVATION - AS GOD WORKS IN US

James 2:20-24 You foolish man, do you want evidence that faith without deeds is useless? {21} Was not our ancestor Abraham considered righteous for what he did...{22} You see that his faith and his actions were working together, and his faith was made complete by what he did...{24} You see that a person is justified by what he does and not by faith alone.

c. Progressive - Sanctification LIFE LONG JOURNEY OF FAITH

SOMETIMES ABE SEEMS TO TAKE 2 STEPS BACKWARDS- A STEP FORWARD

ABE'S FAILURES WERE POINTS WHERE GRACE OF GOD SHINED BRIGHTEST

Hebrews 11:11 By faith Abraham, even though he was past age--and Sarah herself was barren--was enabled to become a father because he considered him faithful who had made the promise. {12} And so from this one man, and he as good as dead, came descendants as numerous as the stars in the sky and as countless as the sand on the seashore. {13} All these people were still living by faith when they died. They did not receive the things promised; they only saw them and welcomed them from a distance. And they admitted that they were aliens and strangers on earth.

PROMISE OF GOD HELD OUT FOR ABE AND ALL US HIS CHILDREN

Phil1:6 he who began a good work in you will carry it on to completion until the day of Christ Jesus.

THINK OF PROCESS OF SANCTIFICATION "being made holy" // CAR WASH

2. The Seal on Abraham

a. Righteousness CIRCUMCISION WAS A SIGN OF RIGHTEOUSNESS

v. 2 I will confirm my covenant between me and you and will greatly increase your numbers."

RIGHTEOUSNESS OF GOD - PERFECT AND ALL SUFFICIENT - FREE GIFT
BASED ON THE RIGHTEOUS LIFE AND DEATH OF THE LORD JESUS
AS THE LAMB OF GOD AND THE PROPITIATION FOR OUR SINS
EXCLUSIVE GROUNDS FOR OUR SALVATION

CIRCUMCISION WAS THE SYMBOL OF FAITH - NOT THE SUBSTANCE OF IT

JEWS CAME TO TRUST IN SYMBOL - NOT WHAT IT STOOD FOR
SIGN = REALITY - TODAY - IF I am baptized, or church member, I am surely saved!

2000 YEARS AFTER ABE - JEWS MISUNDERSTOOD PLAN OF SALVATION
Romans 4:9-10 Is this blessedness only for the circumcised, or also for the uncircumcised? We have been saying that Abraham's faith was credited to him as righteousness. {10} Under what circumstances was it credited? Was it after he was circumcised, or before? It was not after, but before!

G 6:15 Neither circumcision nor uncircumcision means anything; what counts is a new creation.

b. Faith TAKING HOLD OF GOD'S RIGHTEOUSNESS

MAKING IT OURS - RECEIVING GOD'S GIFT - BRINGS US NEAR TO GOD

SHOCKING AND COURAGEOUS ACT OF OBEDIENCE

{24} Abraham was ninety-nine years old when he was circumcised,

HE COULD HAVE MADE MANY EXCUSES - THIS IS JUST FOR KIDS
HE COULD HAVE OFFERED GOD 100 HEAD OF CATTLE AS SACRIFICE
HE TOOK THE KNIFE TO HIMSELF - HIS OBEDIENCE WAS LIMITLESS
LIFE OF FAITH IS NOT OVER UNTIL DEATH - 70's, 80's, 90's, 100's

AGAIN THE FOCUS IS ON FAITH - NOT ON EMPTY RITUALS

Galatians 5:6 For in Christ Jesus neither circumcision nor uncircumcision has any value. The only thing that counts is faith expressing itself through love.

FACT THAT ABE WAS ABLE TO TAKE THAT DIFFICULT STEP OF FAITH
MADE THOSE OF HIS HOUSEHOLD WILLING TO DO THE SAME

27 And every male in Abraham's household...was circumcised with him.

FAITH IS BOTH CAUGHT AND TAUGHT - DO AS I SAY AND DO!

c. Seal REMOVAL OF THE FORESKIN OF THE MALE LIFE ORGAN

{10} This is my covenant with you and your descendants after you, the covenant you are to keep: Every male among you shall be circumcised.

CUSTOM WAS NOT NEW TO ABRAHAM - OTHER TRIBES DID IT
BECAME A SPECIAL SYMBOL OF THE COVENANT OF GOD

THE SIGN IS IMPOSED ON HIM - CUT INTO HIS LIFE ORGAN

Romans 4:11 And he received the sign of circumcision, a seal of the righteousness that he had by faith while he was still uncircumcised. So then, he is the father of all who believe but have not been circumcised, in order that righteousness might be credited to them.

AN OUTWARD AND VISIBLE SYMBOL OF AN INWARD & SPIRITUAL FAITH

JEWS OF NT GREW TO TRUST IN SIGN ALONE / MARK W/OUT THE MEANING

Romans 2:28} A man is not a Jew if he is only one outwardly, nor is circumcision merely outward and physical. {29} No, a man is a Jew if he is one inwardly; and circumcision is circumcision of the heart, by the Spirit

GENTILES NEED THE TRUE SPIRITUAL CIRCUMCISION OF CHRIST

Colossians 2:11-13 In him you were also circumcised, in the putting off of the sinful nature, not with a circumcision done by the hands of men but with the circumcision done by Christ, {12} having been buried with him in baptism and raised with him through your faith in the power of God, who raised him from the dead. {13} When you were dead in your sins and in the uncircumcision of your sinful nature, God made you alive with Christ.

OLD TESTAMENT INITIATION INTO COVENANT - CIRCUMCISION
NEW TESTAMENT INITIATION INTO COVENANT - BAPTISM

JUST AS PETER PROMISED ON THE DAY OF PENTECOST

Acts 2:39 The promise is for you and your children and for all who are far off--for all whom the Lord our God will call."

3. The Service from Abraham

a. Demand SERIOUS AND SOLEMN RITE / PAINFUL INITIATION

vs. 9-14 Then God said to Abraham, "As for you, you must keep my covenant,.....

SOME SAY "let the children make their own faith decisions" / GIVE CHOICE

PHILOSOPHY IS VERY AMERICAN / BUT NOT VERY BIBLICAL

BIBLE - PARENT IS TO LEAD CHILD WITH LOVING YET FIRM STANDARDS
WAS NO GREAT THRILL FOR 13 yr. old Ishmael to be grabbed by
99 yr. old Father who slices off his foreskin with a knife

{25} and his son Ishmael was thirteen; {26} Abraham and his son Ishmael were both circumcised on that same day.

TALK ABOUT A FATHER SON BONDING FORGED THROUGH SUFFERING!!
NOT JUST A SIGN OF SAVING FAITH / SUBMISSIVE FAITH OF PARENTS

GOD WOULD NOT ALLOW SOME OF EXCUSES WE LET OUR KIDS MAKE
FOR FAILING TO BE FAITHFUL IN THEIR WORSHIP AND SERVICE FOR HIM

NO WAY TO PASS ON FAITH TO NEXT GENERATION /
unless baton is faithfully handed off - by Example and Insistence

CIRCUMCISION FITTING SYMBOL OF PASSING FAITH ON THRU THEIR SEED
was not the MEANS of salvation but the MARK of salvation

GOD SAYS WITHOUT EXCEPTION - {14} Any uncircumcised male, who has not been circumcised in the flesh, will be cut off from his people; he has broken my covenant

SYMBOL CUT ON MALES AS YOUNG AS 8 DAYS OLD / GOD'S SYMBOL

DONALD BARNHOUSE "we have a nature of sin that must be dealt with by the knife "

WOMEN?? NO FEMALE CIRCUMCISION - AS SOME TRIBES DO EVEN TODAY

women were covered by faith of fathers, sons, and brothers

Gal 3:28 There is neither Jew nor Greek, slave nor free, male nor female, for you are all one in Christ Jesus.

SHOCKING EX. HOW SERIOUSLY GOD TOOK DEMAND OF CIRCUMCISION

MOSES HAD BEEN CHOSEN BY GOD TO LEAD HIS PEOPLE OUT OF EGYPT

Exodus 4:24-26 At a lodging place on the way, the LORD met Moses and was about to kill him. {25} But Zipporah took a flint knife, cut off her son's foreskin

GOD'S COMMANDMENTS ARE NOT SUGGESTIONS - WE MUST FEAR HIM

John 14:15 "If you love me, you will obey what I command.

b. Delight SERIOUS DEMAND BRINGS GREAT DELIGHT

IF WE THINK OF A BIG, MEAN SCREAMING HIS ORDERS WE THINK WRONG

ABE IS IN AWE OF GOD AND FILLED WITH JOY AT THE SAME TIME

Genesis 17:17 Abraham fell facedown; he laughed and said to himself, "Will a son be born to a man a hundred years old? Will Sarah bear a child at the age of ninety?"

PSALM 119/8 - ABOUT WORD OF GOD = DELIGHT

v. 16 I delight in your decrees; I will not neglect your word.

v. 24 Your statutes are my delight

v. 35 Direct me in the path of your commands,
for there I find delight. '

v. 47 for I delight in your commands because I love them.

v. 143 Trouble and distress have come upon me,
but your commands are my delight.

PAUL TOOK DELIGHT IN BEING A BONDSLAVE OF THE LORD JESUS

Romans 1:14-15 I am obligated.... {15} That is why I am so eager
to preach the gospel also to you who are at Rome.

MOSES ORDERS THE PEOPLE OF ISRAEL

Deuteronomy 10:16 Circumcise your hearts, therefore, and do not be stiff-necked

YET HE ADDS THAT ONLY GOD CAN REALLY DO THIS WORK

Deut 30:6 The LORD your God will circumcise your hearts and the hearts of your descendants, so that you may love him with all your heart and with all your soul, and live.

c. Distinct GOD HAS JUST ONE WAY OF BRINGING SALVATION TO WORLD

{18} And Abraham said to God, "If only Ishmael might live under your blessing!" {19} Then God said, "Yes, but your wife Sarah will bear you a son, and you will call him Isaac. I will establish my covenant with him as an everlasting covenant for his descendants after him. {20} And as for

Ishmael, I have heard you: I will surely bless him; I will make him fruitful and will greatly increase his numbers. He will be the father of twelve rulers, and I will make him into a great nation.

NATION OF ISHMAEL - MUSLIM PEOPLES - MOROCCO TO INDONESIA
{21} But my covenant I will establish with Isaac, whom Sarah will bear to you by this time next year."

MAYBE GOD WOULD WORK THINGS OUT WITH HIS SON ISHMAEL
IT WOULD BE A LOT EASIER FOR EVERYONE INVOLVED

ABE POURS OUT THE CONCERN OF HIS HEART FOR ISHMAEL TO GOD
CANDLISH "What encouragement we have in this example, to lay aside all reserve in our pleading with God. Freely and frankly we may unburden our hearts to him,

TENDENCY CLING TO THE KNOWN WHAT IS SAFE & PREDICTABLE
ABE HAD TO GIVE UP HIS HOPES THAT ISHMAEL WOULD BE THE ONE
HOPES OF ISHMAEL AS A SAVIOR HAD TO DIE / ISAAC WAS THE ONE

FAITH WILL NOT GROW BY CLINGING BLINDLY TO OLD PLANS AND WAYS

ABE HAD SOME SHOCKING NEWS FOR HIS 90 YEAR OLD BARREN WIFE!!
SHE WOULD BECOME A MOTHER AND A PRINCESS = SARAH

{15} God also said to Abraham, "As for Sarai your wife, you are no longer to call her Sarai; her name will be Sarah. {16} I will bless her and will surely give you a son by her. I will bless her so that she will be the mother of nations; kings of peoples will come from her."

Acts 4:12 Salvation is found in no one else, for there is no other name under heaven

Matthew 7:13-14 "Enter through the narrow gate. For wide is the gate and broad is the road that leads to destruction, and many enter through it. {14} But small is the gate and narrow the road that leads to life, and only a few find it.

d. Direct ABE'S OBEDIENCE WAS IMMEDIATE / NO DELAY OR EXCUSES

vs. 22 When he had finished speaking with Abraham, God went up from him. {23} On that very day Abraham took his son Ishmael

DID NOT THINK WELL GOD IS GONE NOW - IT WAS 13 YRS SINCE HE CAME
I GOT TIME UNTIL I NEED TO DO WHAT HE SAID

ABE WAS LIKE THE PSALMIST WHO SAID
Psa 119:60 I will hasten and not delay to obey your commands.

Ecclesiastes 5:4 When you make a vow to God, do not delay in fulfilling it. He has no pleasure in fools; fulfill your vow.

DID NOT SAY LIKE THE MAN IN THE NT PARABLE OF JESUS

Luke 12:19,20 And I'll say to myself, "You have plenty of good things laid up for many years. Take life easy; eat, drink and be merry." "But God said to him, 'You fool! This very night your life will be demanded from you.

v. 23 all those born in his household or bought with his money, every male in his household, & circumcised them, as God told him.

EAGER THAT THE BLESSING OF GOD BE UPON HIS ENTIRE HOUSEHOLD
WHEN WAS THE LAST TIME YOU SHARED JESUS WITH A MEMBER OF FAMILY?

WE MAY NOT BE ABLE TO FORCE THEM - AS ABE DID HIS HOUSEHOLD
BUT WE SHOULD SHARE HIS ZEAL AND BURDEN TO SEE ALL SAVED

PATTERN REVEALED IN THIS CHAPTER

- v. 4 GOD SAYS "As for me
- v. 9 Then God said to Abraham, "As for you
- v. 15 "As for Sarai your wife
- v. 20 And as for Ishmael
- v. 27 And every male in Abraham's household

BLESSING OF GOD SPILLED OVER FROM ABE TO OTHERS

MAN WAS RECENTLY HOSPITALIZED - SERIOUS ILLNESS
YET SHOWED GREAT LOVE AND CONCERN FOR OTHERS
WHEN DISCHARGED PEOPLE SAID "we're glad you were in hospital"

FAMILY IN APARTMENT HOUSE WAS FORCED TO MOVE BY A HIKE IN RENT
LANDLORD SAID "No we don't want you to leave, we'll keep your rent right where it is... you are such a blessing to us all"

WHO IS GETTING SPRAYED FROM THE FOUNTAIN OF YOUR JOY??

WHO ARE YOUR COVENANT CHILDREN - HEIRS OF THE FAITH OF ABRAHAM?