

El Shaddai

Genesis 17.1-27

Early 1980's remote part of UGANDA – No telephone, internet, mail 6 mo's
 Lived on Campus of Theological College - Learned New M Neighbors Coming
 Start family – TOO MUCH Time on our Hands > Imagining their NAMES
 Pop, Jump, ++ Faithful, Trusty, Surely.... POSITIVE, VIRTUOUS, NAMES
 START Family delayed by Months -- False, Won't, Can't, Never.....START

People lived 4000 yrs Ago – TIME on Hands – Talked about Funny Names
 Ancient Near East like CHINA Everything is Everyone's Business....Kids???
 One SURE LAUGH > Well Known, Wealthy, Influential man, ABRAM
 GREAT FATHER > NO KIDS! For 86 years – Now JUST ONE CHILD
 ABRAHAM “Father of MULTITUDE” just 1 kid – SMILE on People's Faces!

TEXT – 99 YEARS Old – 13 years since HEARD from God – Walking by
 Faith!

25 Yrs since CALL of God in Ch 12 > 13 yrs since BIRTH of Ishmael
 STILL NO Son from Wife SARAI

Abe NEEDED to Live by FAITH – HOLD ON to Promises of God
 Like ELIZABETH ELLIOT he'd learned to keep going DO THE NEXT THING
 HOPE and REDEMPTION AFTER Abe made a BIG MESS of THINGS

1. Salvation for Abraham

Word “SALVATION” – COMPOSITE Term – All God does for US in Christ
 Election, Adoption, Regeneration, Justification, Sanctification, Glorification

a. Passive: Justification

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

ABE SPENT Most of HIS TIME THIS WAY during GOD'S MONOLOGUE

COVENANT Common in Ancient World – btwn Men and Nations

NO Examples in Ancient World – Covenant between GOD and MAN

Covenant of God – begun in ch 15 – completed NOW – 2 Sides of 1 Transaction

In the sense that Pentecost was the birthday of the church, this was the birthday of the church of the Old Testament. Derek Kidner

YEARS BEFORE WHEN GOD MADE THE COVENANT WITH ABE

Abram fell into a deep sleep

Genesis 15:12

ONLY GOD WALKED STREET OF BLOOD

vs. 1-8 “I am God Almighty... I have made you the father of a multitude of nations. I will make you exceedingly fruitful, and I will make you into nations, and kings shall come from you. And I will establish my covenant between me and you and your offspring...And I will give to you and to your offspring after you the land of your sojournings...and I will be their God.”

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

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

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

LEGAL DECLARATION - CREDITED AS RIGHTEOUS - NOT GUILTY

b. Participant - Regeneration

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

v. 9 Then God said to Abram "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

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

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

JUSTIFICATION we're PASSIVE: Defendant stands Motionless to Hear Verdict

REGENERATION we're ACTIVE - New Born Baby Squirms and Cries

FAITH is LIKE a MUSCLE - MUST BE EXERCISED OR ATROPHIED

Against all hope, Abraham in hope believed... 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. Yet he did not waver through unbelief regarding the promise of God, but was strengthened in his faith and gave glory to God, being fully persuaded that God had power to do what he had promised. This is why "it was credited to him as righteousness." Romans 4:18-22

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

Saved by Faith ALONE – But TRUE FAITH is NEVER ALONE > Bears Fruit

Was not our ancestor Abraham considered righteous for what he did...You see that his faith and his actions were working together, and his faith was made complete by what he did... James 2:21-23

NOT Saved BY Good Works > Saved FOR Good Works, to Walk in Them!

PEOPLE that STAY IN CHRIST > Faithfully SERVING HIM

SIMPLY PUT - IF THEY ARE NOT SERVING, THEY WILL NOT STAY

c. Progressive - Sanctification LIFE LONG JOURNEY OF FAITH

SOMETIMES ABE TAKES 2 STEPS BACKWARDS, 1 FORWARD – Me too!

ABE'S FAILURES > POINTS where GRACE of GOD SHINED BRIGHTEST

Praise to God he BLESSES some MESSSES!

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. 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. Hebrews 11:11-12

2. Seal on Abraham

a. Righteousness CIRCUMCISION WAS A SIGN OF RIGHTEOUSNESS

v. 1 ...the LORD appeared to Abram and said to him, “I am God Almighty; walk before me, and be blameless

Not be GOOD - Be COMPLETE — Be ALL were CREATED to BE

Abe must have THOUGHT – “I Can’t” > Childless, Landless, Impossible

MOMENT of DOUBT, Wonders what HE Can DO – God reveals New Name

EL SHADDAI – All Sufficient God, Almighty God – God of the Impossible

NAME used 48 X’s in OT

He who dwells in the shelter of the Most High will abide in the shadow of the Almighty: *El Shaddai* Psalm 91.1

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 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’m Saved!

Words of PHARISEE – Chief Exponent of RITUALS – NOW he GETS IT!

Saul of Tarsus > Paul the Apostle – LAW is SHADOW – JESUS is Substance!

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

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

v. 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

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

FACT THAT ABE TOOK THAT DIFFICULT STEP OF FAITH

MADE THOSE OF HIS HOUSEHOLD WILLING TO DO THE SAME

v. 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

v. 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.

CIRCUMCISION – Already Widely Practiced in Ancient World

God TRANSFORMS Common Practice with NEW HOLINESS, MEANING

SIGN of MANHOOD – Rite of PUBERTY – Today in Islam and Africa

Different > BIRTH = Sign of COVENANT MEMBERSHIP by Grace

God will NEVER CEASE to be THEIR GOD

and they must NEVER CEASE to Wear this God-Ordained UNIFORM

Many JEWS in NT TRUSTED IN SIGN / MARK W/OUT THE MEANING

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

GENTILES NEED THE TRUE SPIRITUAL CIRCUMCISION OF CHRIST

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, 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. When you were dead in your sins and in the uncircumcision of your sinful nature, God made you alive with Christ.
Colossians 2:11-13

OLD TESTAMENT INITIATION INTO COVENANT - CIRCUMCISION

NEW TESTAMENT INITIATION INTO COVENANT - BAPTISM

3. Service from Abraham

a. Demand SERIOUS AND SOLEMN RITE / PAINFUL INITIATION

vs. 9 God said to Abraham, “As for you, you shall keep my covenant, you and your offspring after you throughout their generations.”

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

PHILOSOPHY IS VERY AMERICAN / BUT NOT VERY BIBLICAL

BIBLE: PARENT LEADS 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

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

TALK ABOUT A FATHER SON BONDING – BROTHERS IN BLOOD

NOT Just SIGN of SAVING Faith / also a SUBMISSIVE Faith, Father & Son

CIRCUMCISION SYMBOL OF PASSING FAITH ON THRU THEIR SEED

was NOT the MEANS of Salvation but the MARK of Salvation

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

"we have a nature of sin that must be dealt with by the knife" Donald Barnhouse

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

HOW do our KIDS Learn to attend PILLOW Presbyterian or BEDSIDE Baptist

Why do they FOLLOW Faithfully the Message of PASTOR MATTRESS?

Too Often it is what they LEARN from US as their PARENTS!

SHOCKING EX. HOW SERIOUSLY GOD TOOK DEMAND OF CIRC.

MOSES - CHOSEN BY GOD TO LEAD HIS PEOPLE OUT OF EGYPT

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

FOXHOLE Conversions – CALL on God Save You in GREAT NEED!

PROBLEM Bigger than you can HANDLE – Forget Problem, Forget Promise

HOT PLACE in HELL for Person who STARTS with Jesus does NOT Finish

GOD'S COMMANDMENTS NOT SUGGESTIONS - WE MUST FEAR HIM

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

b. Delight SERIOUS DEMAND BRINGS GREAT DELIGHT

IF Picture BIG, MEAN God SCREAMING HIS ORDERS You THINK Wrong
 ABE IS IN AWE OF GOD AND FILLED WITH JOY AT THE SAME TIME

v. 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 – ALL ABOUT WORD OF GOD = 8 Words of DELIGHT

I delight in your decrees; I will not neglect your word. Psalm 119.16

Your statutes are my delight Psalm 119.24

Direct me in the path of your commands, for there I find delight. ' Psalm 119.35

...for I delight in your commands because I love them. Psalm 119.47

Trouble and distress have come upon me, but your commands are my delight.
 Psalm 119.143

PAUL TOOK DELIGHT IN BEING A BONDSLAVE OF THE LORD JESUS

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

c. Distinct - GOD has 1 WAY OF BRINGING SALVATION TO WORLD

v. 18 Abraham said to God, "If only Ishmael might live under your blessing!"

“Don’t WORK TOO HARD, Lord” – ISHMAEL will Do for Blessing

Old MAN and OLD BARREN WOMAN – IMPOSSIBLE to have CHILD

Abe LAUGHS to THINK of Such a SHOCKING POSSIBILITY

vs. 19,21 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... But my covenant I will establish with Isaac, whom Sarah will bear to you by this time next year."

God got LAST LAUGH > Sent them an ISAAC, “Son of LAUGHTER”

v. 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

ABE POURS OUT CONCERN OF HIS HEART FOR ISHMAEL TO GOD

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.

Robert Candlish

Pray that Sons of Ishmael will receive Blessing of Abe Today in Isa' Masik

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 & WAYS

ABE had SOME SHOCKING NEWS for his 90 yr OLD BARREN WIFE!!

SHE WOULD BECOME A MOTHER AND A PRINCESS = SARAH

vs. 15,16 God also said to Abraham, "As for Sarai your wife, you are no longer to call her Sarai; her name will be Sarah. 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."

NAME CHANGING shows MASTERY – Adam Named/Ruled ANIMALS

GOD is the SOVEREIGN, COVENANT, LORD over those HE NAMES

SARAI > MOTHER of KINGS > SARAH = PRINCESS

COVENANT OBLIGATION for SARAH – Very Important OMISSION

MUST SAY Clearly ABSOLUTELY NEVER Applies to WOMEN

Female circumcision cannot be justified from the Bible. Samuel Ngewa

Women were Covered by Faith of Fathers, Sons, and Brothers

SARAH > KINGS = Long SURVIVAL and Great SUCCESS

She HERSELF would only bear ONE Son > Covenant God bring Multitude
LINE of Blessing leads to THE Son and SAVIOR – Lord Jesus Christ

MOSES ORDERS THE PEOPLE OF ISRAEL

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

YET HE ADDS THAT ONLY GOD CAN REALLY DO THIS WORK

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. Deuteronomy 30:6

d. Direct OBEDIENCE WAS IMMEDIATE / NO DELAY OR EXCUSES

vs. 22 When he had finished speaking with Abraham, God went up from him.

DID NOT THINK - WELL GOD IS GONE NOW –

13 YRS SINCE HE CAME Last Time = No RUSH to do PAINFUL SLICING!

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

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. Luke 12:19,20

ABE WAS LIKE THE PSALMIST WHO SAID

I will hasten and not delay to obey your commands. Psalm 119:60

Abram was aware that even though he had been privileged to be in conversation
with the Lord, the Lord remained God. Samuel Ngewa

v. 23 *On that very day Abraham* took his son Ishmael all those born in his
household or bought with his money, every male in his household, and
circumcised them, as God told him.

EAGER THAT BLESSING OF GOD BE UPON HIS ENTIRE HOUSEHOLD

WHEN was LAST TIME YOU SHARED Jesus with FAMILY MEMBER?

WE Cannot FORCE THEM - AS Father 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

Christian 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"

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

WHO are YOUR Covenant CHILDREN – Co- HEIRS of FAITH of Abe?
God we WORSHIP > God of Abraham – God who brings FAITH like Abraham
Life out of Death – Love out of Hatred – Peace out of Turmoil
Joy out of Misery – Praise out of Cursing – Strength to those who Trust Him

Does ALL this thru Jesus Christ – True SEED and True SON of Abraham
Calls you to TRUST Him – Forgiveness of Sin – Eternal Life
Find His COVENANT PROMISES True in Your Life and Your Family

Genesis 17:1 When Abram was ninety-nine years old the LORD appeared to Abram and said to him, "I am God Almighty; walk before me, and be blameless, 2 that I may make my covenant between me and you, and may multiply you greatly." 3 Then Abram fell on his face. And God said to him, 4"Behold, my covenant is with you, and you shall be the father of a multitude of nations. 5 No longer shall your name be called Abram, but your name shall be Abraham, for I

have made you the father of a multitude of nations. 6 I will make you exceedingly fruitful, and I will make you into nations, and kings shall come from you. 7 And I will establish my covenant between me and you and your offspring after you throughout their generations for an everlasting covenant, to be God to you and to your offspring after you. 8 And I will give to you and to your offspring after you the land of your sojournings, all the land of Canaan, for an everlasting possession, and I will be their God.” 9 And God said to Abraham, “As for you, you shall keep my covenant, you and your offspring after you throughout their generations. 10 This is my covenant, which you shall keep, between me and you and your offspring after you: Every male among you shall be circumcised. 11 You shall be circumcised in the flesh of your foreskins, and it shall be a sign of the covenant between me and you. 12 He who is eight days old among you shall be circumcised. Every male throughout your generations, whether born in your house or bought with your money from any foreigner who is not of your offspring, 13 both he who is born in your house and he who is bought with your money, shall surely be circumcised. So shall my covenant be in your flesh an everlasting covenant. 14 Any uncircumcised male who is not circumcised in the flesh of his foreskin shall be cut off from his people; he has broken my covenant.” 15 And God said to Abraham, “As for Sarai your wife, you shall not call her name Sarai, but Sarah shall be her name. 16 I will bless her, and moreover, I will give you a son by her. I will bless her, and she shall become nations; kings of peoples shall come from her.” 17 Then Abraham fell on his face and laughed and said to himself, “Shall a child be born to a man who is a hundred years old? Shall Sarah, who is ninety years old, bear a child?” 18 And Abraham said to God, “Oh that Ishmael might live before you!” 19 God said, “No, but Sarah your wife shall bear you a son, and you shall call his name Isaac. I will establish my covenant with him as an everlasting covenant for his offspring after him. 20 As for Ishmael, I have heard you; behold, I have blessed him and will make him fruitful and multiply him greatly. He shall father twelve princes, and I will make him into a great nation. 21 But I will establish my covenant with Isaac, whom Sarah shall bear to you at this time next year.” 22 When he had finished talking with him, God went up from Abraham. 23 Then Abraham took Ishmael his son and all those born in his house or bought with his money, every male among the men of Abraham's house, and he circumcised the flesh of their foreskins that very day, as God had said to him. 24 Abraham was ninety-nine years old 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 That very day Abraham and his son Ishmael were circumcised. 27 And all the men of his house, those born in the house and those bought with money from a foreigner, were circumcised with him.

1. Imagine the mix of feelings Abram and Sarai had as they watched Ishmael grow.
2. What are the Covenant obligations, for God? for Abram? (See also, 15:1,4-18).
3. What are the connections between God's promises and commands?
4. How does Abram's posture before God (vs. 3,17) compare with yours?
