



The Covenant Confirmed

Genesis 17

How to use this Scripture Engagement



Pray to Begin

Before you start each lesson, ask the Lord to use it to grow you in grace and in the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ.



Read the Bible passage

Invite God to open your eyes and deepen your understanding of His Word as you read the passage.



Study the Scripture Engagement Guide

Go through the Scripture Engagement study provided to reflect on the meaning, context, and personal application of the passage you've read.



Reflect on the Scripture Engagement Questions

After every teaching, consider the Scripture Engagement questions listed for personal reflection and application and for your small group discussions.



Listen to Dr. J. Vernon McGee's Teaching

If you'd like to hear the complete audio teaching on the passage, [visit ttb.bible](https://ttb.bible) or scan the QR code on the last page to download the THRU the BIBLE app in your own language.



Use our recommended **pause and resume icon**. This will guide you to move through the content thoughtfully and at your own rhythm.

For your consideration

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The Covenant Confirmed

Dear Heavenly Father,

Remind me that You are Almighty and faithful to every promise. Strengthen my faith to walk before You blamelessly, to believe in what seems impossible, and to rest in Your everlasting covenant.

Amen.



God Renames Abram and Sarai



Genesis 17:1-19

"Here was a man who was a father before he had any children. Abraham was Abraham, father of a multitude, by faith at that time."

- Dr. J Vernon McGee

Fourteen years have passed and Abram is now ninety-nine years old. The Lord appeared to him again. God breaks the silence with a new revelation of His name: **El Shaddai "I am Almighty God"**. This name means "the All-Sufficient One". The God who has absolute power to do what He promises.



What was God revealing about Himself through the name El Shaddai?

This is the fifth recorded appearance of God to Abram, and the word "covenant" appears thirteen times in this chapter. God comes to reaffirm His promise and to rule out Ishmael as the heir. His covenant is not built on human effort but divine ability.

“

No longer shall your name be called Abram, but your name shall be Abraham; for I have made you a father of many nations.

Genesis 17:5

”

Abram means "exalted father," but Abraham means "father of a multitude". God changes his name before the promise is fulfilled. In faith, Abraham must live by what God calls him, not by what he sees.



Have you ever been called to believe before seeing?

Try and imagine the scene with us: travelers stopping by Abraham's tent, asking, "What's your name?" and laughing when he replies, "Father of a multitude", though he has no child through Sarah. Yet Abraham continues to believe. He becomes a father by faith long before Isaac's birth.

Faith calls things that are not as though they were.



God has made a covenant with these people that is an everlasting covenant. Since it is, it is not one that will be easily broken, and it is not one that is going to run out. God did not give them a ninety-nine-year lease on the land. God gave them an everlasting possession.



From verses 6 to 9, God's promise unfolds in detail. This is not a temporary arrangement. God says the covenant is **everlasting** - a word that appears repeatedly in His assurance.

This covenant is not conditional upon Abraham's perfection but upon God's promise. It rests entirely on the "I will" of God.

Finally we are introduced to **the sign of the covenant: circumcision**.

"This is My covenant which you shall keep, between Me and you and your descendants after you: Every male child among you shall be circumcised."

Genesis 17:10

This physical act symbolized being spiritually set apart and belonging to God's family. Circumcision was the badge of the covenant, not the basis of it. They did not have to do this in order to get the covenant; God had already made the covenant with them.

Likewise, for believers today, good works do not earn salvation; they testify that we belong to God. We do not work to become His children. We obey because we are His children.



Have you been 'circumcised'?

New Names

GOD (Revelation)

EL SHADAI

יְדֵשׁ לֵא

I am Almighty God

ABRAM



ABRAHAM

[Father]

[Father of a Multitude]

אַבְרָם

אַבְרָהָם

SARAI



SARAH

[My Princess]

[Princess]

סָרַי

סָרָה



“As for Sarai your wife, you shall not call her name Sarai, but Sarah shall be her name. And I will bless her and also give you a son by her.” *Genesis 17:15-16*

Her name changes too. From **“my princess”** to **“princess”**, a mother of nations.

Abraham’s response is beautiful, **“Then Abraham fell on his face and laughed.”** *Genesis 17:17*

This laughter is not unbelief but wonder. He rejoices in the sheer impossibility of it all. It is a laughter of joy that God would do the unthinkable.

But as joy rises, so does a pang of pain. Abraham remembers Ishmael. **“And Abraham said to God, ‘Oh, that Ishmael might live before You!’”** *Genesis 17:18*

It is a plea from a father’s heart. Abraham loves his son, but God’s plan is sovereign.

God does not accept Ishmael as the heir of promise. His covenant will come through Isaac, the child of faith and miracle.

When God fulfills His promise, no human plan can replace it.

 **Have you ever tried to pass your plans off as God’s plans?**

Faith before Fulfillment

You shall be a father of many nations.
Genesis 17:4





Reflection

Question 1

What does circumcision as a covenant sign teach us about the difference between inward faith and outward acts?

Question 2

How does Abraham's laughter remind you that joy often accompanies faith in the impossible?



Application

Question 3

What is one area in your life where you need to stop negotiating with God and simply trust His “I will”?

Draw your Application



Ishmael's Inheritance



Genesis 17:20-27



God holds to the promise that He has made. God is not to be deterred or deferred from this at all. He is going to do the exact thing that He said He would do. He speaks as if Isaac were already born and in their midst. He speaks of things that are not as if they are - and it is going to be next year.

God does not ignore Abraham's love for Ishmael. In His mercy, He promises blessing, though not the covenant. Ishmael will be fruitful, the father of twelve princes and a great nation, but the covenant will pass through Isaac.



Did God have to bless Ishmael? What do His actions teach us?

"But My covenant I will establish with Isaac, whom Sarah shall bear to you at this set time next year." *Genesis 17:21*

God's will is settled. Abraham need not plead further. Sometimes God's answer is firm, and obedience is the only faithful response. Abraham immediately obeys.

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“So Abraham took Ishmael his son, all who were born in his house, and all who were bought with his money, every male among the men of Abraham’s house, and circumcised the flesh of their foreskins that very same day, as God had said to him.” *Genesis 17:23*

After God revealed the covenant, Abraham immediately obeys. Even though Ishmael didn't belong to the covenant, he is also included in the act of obedience since he belonged to Abraham's household.



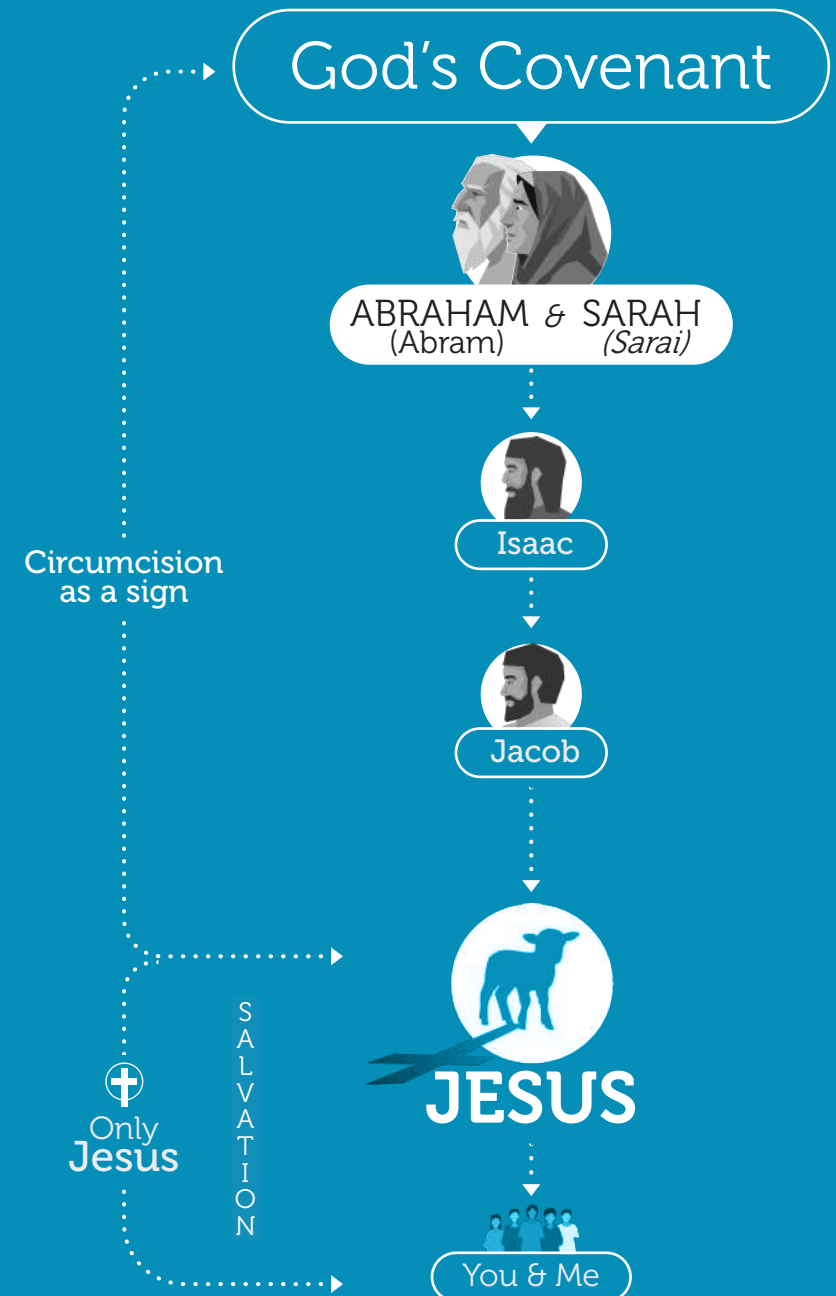
 What is one **act of obedience** you can take as a **sign of faith in God's promise**, even before the results appear?

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Question 1

Draw your Application

Visual Summary



Your Takeaway

Integrating **'God's Intelligence'** in my life.

What kind of covenant did God make with Abraham? An everlasting covenant. If it is everlasting, is it good today? It certainly is. God promised you and me everlasting life if we will trust Christ - that is a covenant God has made.

"



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