

## God Confirms His Covenant (Genesis 17)

### ❖ There is such a strong connection with this text and the Lord's Supper today...

- Please continue to prepare your hearts toward God as we see God's Faithfulness
- God is a covenant keeping God... Meaning... He keeps His promises... His contracts...
- **And we are reminded of this every time we take the Lord's Supper...**
  - Teach this to your children
  - When we eat the bread we are reminded that it is God the Father who gave up His Son
  - When we eat the bread we are reminded it was God the Son who gave up His body
  - When we drink the wine we are reminded that God confirmed His covenant
    - By the shedding of His own blood
- **We have such a great opportunity for repentance and worship before God this morning**

### ❖ Introduction:

#### ➤ 1) Genesis written as a Polemic in its Day

- An argument from God through Moses against the many false beliefs of its day.
- **This continues even today**
  - Genesis still stands as a book to combat the false narratives around us.
  - **Deuteronomy 11:19 You shall teach them to your children, talking of them when you are sitting in your house, and when you are walking by the way, and when you lie down, and when you rise.**

#### ➤ 2) What have we seen in Genesis so far:

- God creating the world ex nihilo... out of nothing
- God creating man personally... and planting a garden for him and providing for him
- **We see man turning from the command of God**
  - And listening to the voice of another... setting himself up as god in his own life
  - We see the sinfulness of man spread like cancer from generation to generation
- **Until God says enough:**
  - He wipes out the entirety of the human race except for Noah and his family
  - God establishes a covenant with Noah and blesses him
- **But, man continues his foolishness as God blesses them with children**
  - They come together in one place at Babel to make a name for themselves
  - God confuses their languages and causes them to spread out over all the earth
- **And then we come to the man Abram...**
  - This one man that God chooses from all the nations of the earth...
  - To bless him and the world through him
- **The promises and blessings to Abraham**
  - **Are promises and blessings to the rest of mankind that follow in the faith of Abraham**
  - **Please see this today... replace the name of Abraham with your name...**
  - **I know that may sound odd... but I believe it to be true...**
  - **Abraham stands here as a representative of all those who will believe God...**
  - **And the Bible backs this up...**

#### ➤ 3) What is there to learn here:

- **When you really study the book of Genesis.... I mean really dig deep**
  - You notice the sinfulness of mankind... and it is so deep and so perverse
  - Even the most perverse sins of our day were seen thousands of years ago
- **But what stands out all the more than the sinfulness of man**
  - The character of God...

- God's power and might are on display throughout
- God's hatred toward sin and judgment against it
- God's love and mercy toward sinful man... God's patience with us...
- **And it is clear... that those who believe God... trust in His Word... and obey Him...**
  - They will be blessed beyond measure...

❖ **Read the text together this morning... and we will focus on 7 amazing things concerning God Almighty**

➤ **God Confirms the Covenant**

- Genesis 17:1-27 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, <sup>2</sup> that I may make my covenant between me and you, and may multiply you greatly." <sup>3</sup> Then Abram fell on his face. And God said to him, <sup>4</sup> "Behold, my covenant is with you, and you shall be the father of a multitude of nations. <sup>5</sup> 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. <sup>6</sup> I will make you exceedingly fruitful, and I will make you into nations, and kings shall come from you. <sup>7</sup> 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. <sup>8</sup> 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."

➤ **Abram is Commanded to Commit**

- <sup>9</sup> And God said to Abraham, "As for you, you shall keep my covenant, you and your offspring after you throughout their generations. <sup>10</sup> This is my covenant, which you shall keep, between me and you and your offspring after you: Every male among you shall be circumcised. <sup>11</sup> You shall be circumcised in the flesh of your foreskins, and it shall be a sign of the covenant between me and you. <sup>12</sup> 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, <sup>13</sup> 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. <sup>14</sup> 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."

➤ **Abram Sees Impossibility**

- <sup>15</sup> And God said to Abraham, "As for Sarai your wife, you shall not call her name Sarai, but Sarah shall be her name. <sup>16</sup> 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." <sup>17</sup> 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?" <sup>18</sup> And Abraham said to God, "Oh that Ishmael might live before you!" <sup>19</sup> 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. <sup>20</sup> 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. <sup>21</sup> But I will establish my covenant with Isaac, whom Sarah shall bear to you at this time next year."

➤ **Abram Does as God Commands**

- <sup>22</sup> When he had finished talking with him, God went up from Abraham. <sup>23</sup> 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. <sup>24</sup> Abraham was ninety-nine years old when he was circumcised in the flesh of his foreskin. <sup>25</sup> And Ishmael his son was thirteen years old when he was circumcised in the flesh of his foreskin. <sup>26</sup> That very day Abraham and his son Ishmael were circumcised. <sup>27</sup> 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) He is God Almighty

- 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, <sup>2</sup>that I may make my covenant between me and you, and may multiply you greatly.”
- **God calls Himself El Shaddai**
  - In the Hebrew text we see: I the God Almighty
- **This God stood above all the false gods surrounding Abram...**
  - He was an Almighty God...
  - **Meaning:** Well... what do you think it means?
    - All powerful... nothing compares...
- **The children of God would continue to use this name for God...**
  - God the Almighty One... the one who stands above all things...
  - The creator of time and matter and life...
  - The one who can manipulate the laws of physics for His own glory...
    - Because He is the one who established the laws of Physics... He wrote them!
- **Don't tell the God Almighty what is possible and what is not possible...**
  - With God Almighty... all things are possible...
  - There is nothing that can stand outside of His will...
    - **Jeremiah 32:27** “Behold, I am the LORD, the God of all flesh. Is anything too hard for me?”
- **This is why it is ludicrous to even imply that God is not Sovereign over all things**
  - How can we mere men say that there is anything God can not do?
  - How can we mere men say that we can hinder the will of the Almighty One?
  - How can we mere men think that anything can frustrate the plans of God Almighty?
    - We need to reconsider our theology before we breathe such blasphemous ideals...

## ❖ 2) Nothing is Impossible with God Almighty

- And God said to him, <sup>4</sup>“Behold, my covenant is with you, and you shall be the father of a multitude of nations.
- **But Abram was 99 years old! And Sarah was 90**
  - And if you think that is old now... it was old then as well!
    - This is after the flood... And God would allow Abram to have many more years...
    - But this was very old
- **Yet God is promising them a child at this age...**
  - We know how old this must have been by the response of Abram
  - God called Abram at 75 years of age... and here we are 24 years later...
  - Abram has made a lot of mistakes along the way, yet God remained faithful...
  - The last we saw of Abram was 14 years ago when he had a son Ishmael...
  - He was impatient with the plan of God...
- **Yet 14 years later God Almighty appears before Abram...**
  - And He reminds Abram of His promise.... But it's been 24 years since God made the first promise
  - So Abram responds as many of us would...
    - <sup>17</sup>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?” <sup>18</sup>And Abraham said to God, “Oh that Ishmael might live before you!”
- **He falls on his face before God again... but this time He laughs...**
  - Now... I do not see disrespect from Abram here...
  - We see him bowing before God... falling on his face before God in worship...
  - But we do see wonder and amazement... And Abram laughs!

- And He speaks to himself... how can this be... how can this happen...
    - Because in the eyes of man it was impossible...
  - **And Abram falls into the same trap he fell into 14 years ago...**
    - He offers up Ishmael as a solution... as the one to make it all come together...
    - Oh that Ishmael could be the one...
  - **But God Almighty is a God of the impossible...**
    - The word impossible is not included in God's vocabulary...
    - He spoke the world into existence.... Out of nothing...
    - What is too hard for God Almighty?
  - **Practical: This is oh so practical for us this morning**
    - **Do you see the impossible when God tells you it is possible...**
      - Are you blinded by the laws of nature and science around you...
      - Have doctors and psychologists and friends and family told you one thing
      - Has your experience told you one thing...
    - **While God stands in His Character as God Almighty and He promises He can do all things!**
  - **Do you know why we see so few miracles in our life?**
    - It is because our faith is so small... and our patience is non existent...
    - We will not wait on God.... Faith is always about waiting... It is always about trusting...
      - Maybe God wants to change your character before He answers you prayers...
  - **He made a promise to Abram and would not fulfill it for 25 years....**
    - 25 years!!!! Many in here have not even been Christians for that long...
    - Are you trusting in God when everyone else tells you something is impossible...
  - **God is Faithful... He calls you to trust Him and Walk in His ways... And Wait**
    - Trust God that He will walk with you through pain
      - Trust that He can take it away
    - Trust God when He says He will complete that Good work he began in you
      - Trust the Jesus is more to be desired and enjoyed than your pet sin
      - Trust that He is better...
      - Wait on Him even if it means you die waiting... He is faithful.... He is God Almighty
    - Your lost loved one is not impossible for God...
      - That person you think will never come to church is not impossible for God
    - Your struggles with despair, or self worth, or depression, or anxiety
      - They are not impossible for God...
  - **I do not know how... I do not know when... Abram sure didn't...**
    - But I do know Who.... And the who promises to deliver and provide for His children...
    - But He calls on them to walk before Him...
  - **Could our not seeing God answer prayers be directly tied to:**
    - Our failure to walk rightly before Him...
      - Does our character need some work first?
    - Or... has our faith been so small that it needs to grow...?
      - And maybe we just need to wait?
  - **When God says yes He means yes**
    - When God makes a promise He keeps a promise
- ❖ **2) Nothing is impossible with God Almighty**
- ❖ **3) God Almighty Changes our Name**
- **<sup>5</sup> 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.**

- **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.
- **God changes Abram’s name to Abraham... Father of many nations...**
  - Sarai to Sarah who will conceive a royal line
  - Isaac... Laughter... may the Lord smile upon him... He who laughs...
- **Given a new name before God fulfilled the promise...**
  - God speaks in the past tense with Abram... “for I have made you the father of a multitude of nations”
- **God is has changed our names also...**
  - From enemies to friends
  - From rebels to sons
  - We are even promised a brand new name one day if we overcome...
- **God doesn’t just change our name, but he changes who we are...**
  - **Philippians 1:6** And I am sure of this, that he who began a good work in you will bring it to completion at the day of Jesus Christ.

#### ❖ 4) Abram Fell on His Face before God Almighty

- **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, <sup>2</sup>that I may make my covenant between me and you, and may multiply you greatly.” <sup>3</sup>Then Abram fell on his face.**
- **When is the last time we fell on our face before God?**
  - It could mean so little....
  - But it could mean so much
- **Abram fell on his face before the Lord God Almighty...**
  - He humbled himself before God... with his face to the ground in reverence...
  - When is the last time you were in the posture physically before God...
  - Not to mention mentally and spiritually...
- **Muslims bow down three times a day and they pray to a false god...**
  - Yet for many Christians they haven’t bowed like this three times in the last year...
- **Before we take the Lord’s Supper I am going to invite all of us in here to bow before God today...**
  - Confessing sin, asking for stronger faith, offering up praise and giving thanks...
  - **Nehemiah 9:6** "You alone are the LORD You have made the heavens, The heaven of heavens with all their host, The earth and all that is on it, The seas and all that is in them You give life to all of them And the heavenly host bows down before You.
    - If the heavenly hosts bow before God... will you?
  - **Psalms 5:7** But as for me, by Your abundant lovingkindness I will enter Your house, At Your holy temple I will bow in reverence for You.

#### ❖ 5) Abram Obeyed the Voice of God Almighty

- **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.
  - That very day Abram obeyed the voice of God
- **The people of God have always been called to obedience...**
  - **1 Samuel 15:22** And Samuel said, “Has the LORD as great delight in burnt offerings and sacrifices, as in obeying the voice of the LORD? Behold, to obey is better than sacrifice, and to listen than the fat of rams.
  - **God had told Abram**

- “I am God Almighty; walk before me, and be blameless, <sup>2</sup> that I may make my covenant between me and you, and may multiply you greatly.”
- **This is the call of all Christians...**
  - ◆ When the person gives his life to Jesus... He is saying... I will obey you...
  - ◆ To love God is to obey His Word...
- **Obedience is not however, the glue that keeps the promise...**
  - That would be the character and nature of the God who made the promise
  - Obedience is however... the response of Faith
- ❖ **6) God Almighty Establishes and Keeps the Covenant**
  - **Even though Abram failed many times...**
    - God never failed...
  - **God sought Abram out and made promises to Him...**
    - We never see in the Bible that Abram was this great man on his own...
    - That God saw him living in UR... and Abram was just perfect...
    - And he never worshipped any of those false gods...
  - **NO!... We see God calling Abram out of the land of idols and to Himself...**
    - We see God making promises and confirming them by swearing on himself
  - **We see Abram continuing to stumble but God never wavering...**
    - **1 Peter 2:9 God has called us out of the darkness and into his marvelous light**
- ❖ **7) God Almighty Remains Patient and Merciful with His Children**
  - **We fall in our walk before God...**
    - When we take our eyes off of the character of God
    - And when we take our minds off of the promises of God
  - **God was patient and merciful to Abram...**
    - Remember that we are all like Abram... all of us that have believed...
    - He is a picture of us... and God intended it to be this way...
    - **Abram failed many times... He did some things he wasn't proud of... just like us...**
      - But God continued to work on Abram... to help him grow in his faith...
      - To develop his character...
  - **God's Patience and mercy are seen in His coming as Jesus Christ...**
    - **He was called Emmanuel... God with us...**
    - **He was called Jesus... meaning God will save His people from their sins...**
  - **God's covenant is fulfilled to us through Christ**
    - **God's covenant is fulfilled to us through Christ**
    - Our part is to live consecrated and committed and empowered unto God
- ❖ **Invitation:**
  - **I invite you to fall on your face before God this morning...**
    - Not because the act makes you righteous... but because it humbles you before God
    - You bow before God before the people of this world... saying yes... I worship this God
  - **To know God is to trust Him...**
    - Do you trust Him?
    - Have you ever believed on the name of the Lord Jesus Christ...