

# JESUS IN GENESIS

## SEASON 2

### JESUS IN GENESIS - SEASON 2: GENESIS 17:1-27

#### COMMUNITY GROUP STUDY GUIDE - WEEK OF MAY 16, 2021

##### Introduction:

- This is the third iteration of the covenant with Abraham, 24 years after God first spoke to him and 13 years after the birth of Ishmael from Hagar.
- There is one main focus in this passage: God loves us with a love that goes "all in" and He expects the same kind of love from us in return.

##### Body:

- v1-3: Draws attention to God as "El Shaddai." God is "The Mighty God" who can do the impossible. In the face of impossible odds, His promises will come to pass.
- v3-6: Abram falls on his face in devotion upon the revelation of God. We should allow ourselves to express our worship and love of God in a bodily way. With this name change, God identifies Abraham as a father of a multitude of nations. This came true physically and spiritually, in that Abraham became the father of many nations and Christ Himself, and all those who are in Christ by faith.
- v7: "You and your offspring" teaches us that the blessing of faith that we receive is not just about us, but those who come after us. Abraham saw this; parents need to see this. Parents should care more about children getting into heaven than Harvard.
- v:8-9: God's faithfulness to His covenant requires a response from us. We have to prove faithful to God's covenant in order to fully enjoy God's blessing.
- v10: God specifies how He wants Abraham to respond to His covenant by commanding circumcision. He wants Abraham to be fully devoted to Him, which includes EVERY part of him, including the most treasured part of his anatomy. When man is devoted to God there, he is devoted to God everywhere. Full devotion to God at heart level leads to full devotion in every area of life. Lack of devotion in this area leads to the greatest kind of brokenness in life.
- Circumcision was a sign that was given in order for God's people to show that their devotion was irrevocable. Furthermore, the spilling of blood involved with it points to Christ's bloody sacrifice on the cross.
- Do people need to get circumcised to go to heaven? No (see Acts 15, 1 Cor. 7:18, Gal. 5:6). Acts 15 teaches us that we have a new sign of the covenant, which is baptism. Paul's instruction that baptism is the new sign of the covenant paired with his calls to avoid worship of idols and flee sexual idolatry, shows that, beyond it's covenantal symbolism, circumcision was a sign to help God's followers fight temptation in these areas. It's not going through the motions of the physical act of circumcision or baptism that matters, but true devotion and trust in God that matters, especially as shown in these areas.
- v14: Abraham believed, and because he believed he did works that honored God. Our faith should have the same result. (See James.)
- v15: Sarah is given a new name, which shows that she too has grown in the faith.
- v16-18: Abraham is beginning to understand the ridiculousness of all that God is revealing to him. God deals gently with Abraham's doubts when he suggest that the promises of the covenant be given to Ishmael.
- v19: Isaac means "He laughs." God gets the last laugh in redemptive history.
- v20: God is generous to Ishmael, but doesn't make a covenant with him. This shows us that faith and repentance are gifts from the Lord.
- v22-27: The focus is on "that very day," and how quickly Abraham acts after hearing God's word. At this point, it was humanly possible that Abraham and Sarah would have a baby. This teaches us that the eventual birth of Isaac was a miracle. In the same way, Christ's virgin birth was a miracle. This directs us to think about how salvation of man is utterly impossible apart from the mighty work of El Shaddai.
- The sign of circumcision reminded Abraham that the way to see one's need for salvation and the way to grow in one's faith is by being attentive to one's inner sinfulness. Looking at the cross reminds us of that in the NT age. With circumcised hearts, see how wretched we are, and how marred we are (like the Michelangelo's "Pieta" after it was chipped by a hammer), but we are also/simultaneously reminded how gracious God is to us, and how He is continually transforming us closer to the image of God.

#### DISCUSSION GOALS

##### Head

To understand the faithfulness of God's love toward us and the degree of faithfulness that He expects from us in return.

##### Heart

To trust that salvation and transformation of our lives can only come through the power of The Mighty God, El Shaddai.

##### Hands

To meditate on the sign of Jesus Christ on the cross daily in order to grow in our love of God and obedience to Him.

#### ANNOUNCEMENTS

**Kids' Summer Nights:** Registration is now open for kids ages 4-11 to attend our free, weeklong VBS program this summer! You can register your child(ren) or sign up to volunteer [here](#).

The next **Membership 101 Class** will be on **May 30 at 1PM**. RSVP to [admin@mosaicboston.com](mailto:admin@mosaicboston.com) if you plan to attend.

Please remind covenant members to fill out their **membership covenant recommitment** (link available on their email).

## DISCUSSION QUESTIONS:

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### **Read Genesis 17:1-27**

1. Can someone take a moment to summarize the main point of the sermon?
2. What part of the sermon made this main point most clear to you?
3. **Read verse 3.** Abraham is moved both spiritually and physically upon receiving a reminder from God of His call on his life. Do such reminders stir you to worship? What does that look like in your life?
4. What does the repetitiveness of “you and your offspring” teach about the nature of faith?
5. Do people need to get circumcised in order to be saved?
6. Why did(/does) God require Abraham, and all of his true children, to show devotion with the most important physical part of their anatomy?
7. **Read Galatians 5:6.** What does it mean for one to be circumcised at the heart level?
8. How did Abraham’s experience of circumcision help grow his faith? How does looking to the cross help grow our faith?
9. **Read verse 26.** What is at stake when we don’t respond quickly (in faith) to God’s commands?
10. What lessons can we derive about salvation when we meditate upon God’s selection of Isaac over Ishmael?