

Cultivate Genesis Study

Chapter 17

Read and meditate on Genesis Chapter 17 this week and prayerfully answer the following questions before Tuesday's class.

Read Genesis 17:1-3

1. Can any human being walk without sin before God? What do you suppose God meant when he told Abram to walk "blameless" (NKJV) or "perfect" (KJV) before Him?

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*"God appeared to Abram".*

*"Abram fell on his face, and God talked to him."*

Read Number 16:22, Daniel 8:13-18 and Revelation 7:11

2. This is a common response to being in the presence of God. Why is that?

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Read Genesis 7:5 God changes Abram's (High Father) name to Abraham (Father of a Multitude).

After God's covenant promise to Abraham in Genesis 17:6-8, He now tells Abraham what is expected in return, Abraham's sign of the covenant with God.

Read Genesis 17:9-13

From Benson's Commentary:

It is here said to be the covenant which Abraham and his seed must keep, as a copy or counterpart. It is called a sign and seal, (Romans 4:11,) for it was, 1st, A confirmation to Abraham and his seed of those promises which were God's part of the covenant, assuring them that, in due time, Canaan should be theirs: and the continuance of this ordinance, after Canaan was theirs, intimates that that promise looked further, to another Canaan. 2nd, An obligation

upon Abraham and his seed to that duty which was their part of the covenant, not only to the duty of accepting the covenant, and putting away the corruption of the flesh, which were primarily signified by circumcision, but in general to the observation of all God's commands. They who will have God to be to them a God, must consent to be to him a people.

Read Romans 4:9-12

Abraham was counted righteous (Genesis 15:6) before circumcision. So, his obedience in this matter had nothing to do with his being right with God. This was an outward sign, commanded by God for Abraham and his descendants, the ones who are the benefactors of the covenant.

3. What is the reminder in Ephesians 2:8,9?

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Read Acts 15 to see what the early Church leaders concluded about Gentiles being circumcised.

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Both Old and New Testament reference the "circumcision of the heart"  
Deuteronomy 30:6, Jeremiah 4:4, Romans 2:29, Colossians 2:11

4. How does a Christian today, have assurance that they have a circumcised heart?

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Read Genesis 17:15-22

God changes Sarai's (my princess) name to Sarah (a princess). God has changed both Abram and Sarai's names to reflect that they are not only going to be parents of a child, but also parents of a whole nation of believers.

Read Genesis 32:28, Numbers 13:16, John 1:42, Mark 2:14 and Matthew 9:9, Acts 13:9, and Revelation 2:17

5. Write down who had their names changed, during significant life events.

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Genesis 17:18-21

From Benson's Commentary:

"And Abraham said, O that Ishmael might live before thee! — This he speaks, not as desiring that Ishmael might be preferred before the son he should have by Sarah, but as dreading lest he should be forsaken of God. The great thing we should desire of God for our children is, that they may live before him; that is, that they may be kept in covenant with him, and may have grace to walk before him in uprightness. God's answer to this prayer is an answer of peace. Abraham could not say he sought God's face in vain; nor shall we, if we seek it sincerely."

In Genesis 17:19, God is saying, without a doubt, that Sarah will give birth to the promised heir, carrying the Seed of the Messiah forward. God will, indeed, bless Ishmael; but it is through **Isaac** that all the nations will be blessed. (Genesis 12:3)

6. Read Galatians 4:21-31 and write your thoughts about Paul's comparison of these two sons to Christians living under the law versus living under the Spirit. Bible commentaries may help if this concept is challenging for you.

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In Genesis 17:20, God tells Abraham, "*As for Ishmael, I have heard you.*"

7. Search Scripture verses on God "hearing" or God "heard". What stood out to you?

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8. Can you share a time when God heard you? Perhaps an "unspoken prayer" that you shared with no one? Or something that you did not even pray; but God answered you? Perhaps a time when you did not expect God to answer, but He heard you?

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Praise God, who always hears the petitions of our hearts.

