

**YOU BE SINCERE,
GOD WILL BE ON TIME**
Genesis 17

INTRODUCTION

Since Genesis 12, we have been following the life of Abraham. The Lord has visited and spoken clearly to him several times over 25 years. Abraham's faith has grown, but has also experienced some major lapses and setbacks. Yet, God has always been near.

Now the Lord appears after 13 years of silence to Abraham as **Almighty God - El-Shaddai**. He is the all sufficient, all powerful, tender God who abundantly blesses with all manner of blessings. He establishes circumcision as a sign of the covenant with Abraham and his descendants. In this chapter, we will learn a very valuable lesson.... God Will Be On Time, You Be Sincere.

DIGGING DEEPER

Read Genesis 17 several times. Let the flow of this text wash over you, as Abraham is reassured of God's perfect timing and faithfulness. We will consider what Almighty God expects as our proper response to His promised blessings.

Pray for wisdom and understanding, and let's begin.

- I. Verse 1. Almighty God appears. This is the first time the Lord has identified Himself as Almighty God – El Shaddai. “Walk before me and be perfect.” God is calling for Abraham's behavior to be sincere and blameless. We will study this further at the end of our lesson.
- II. Verses 2-3. Abraham's response. The Lord reaffirms His covenant, and Abraham is genuinely overwhelmed in response, falling on his face in awestruck worship. Are you in awe of Almighty God this way? Is anything keeping you from a heartfelt, passionate response in worshipping God? *Selah*.
- III. Verses 4-5. Abraham receives a new name. From Abram (exalted father) to Abraham (father of a multitude of nations). This name change, given Abraham by God, will define who he is – only God's grace can cause him to live up to this new name. Abraham's destiny was only by God's grace – ours too.
- IV. Verses 6-8. God's promise of the land. The Lord is very clear that this land belongs to the Hebrews. He will repeat this over and over again to Abraham's descendants. Yet, most people throughout history (and today!) are against this God given right of the Israelis to have it. What should we be doing about this?
- V. Verses 9-14. The covenant of circumcision. Other nations practiced circumcision for differing reasons. God wants physical circumcision to remind to His people of a greater value – their relationship with Him in heart. True in the Old and the New Testament too! *Deuteronomy 10:16, Jeremiah 6:10, Jeremiah 9:26, Romans 4:11-12, Colossians 2:11-15*.
- VI. Verses 15-17. God is on time! Simply meditate on this truth. Is anything too hard for God? Will His word ever fail? We may think He is running late; We have a deadline, but **God's timing is just right!!**
- VII. Verses 18-22. God loves Ishmael. No doubt. God will bless Ishmael, but God has a unique relationship with Abraham & Sarah's yet to be born son, Isaac. His plan of redemption is for all who will believe. Hallelujah!
- VIII. Verses 23-27. Obedience...on that very same day... **Sincerity is demonstrated through obedience**. This is the only way to be an active Christian. God calls us to a life of holiness, set apart and consecrated to Him. What does this look like? Where does it begin? Search for Scriptures to shape your behavior. A few to start... *2 Corinthians 6:16-7:1, Romans 12:1-2, Ephesians 4:17-22, Colossians 3:1-17, 2 Timothy 2:20-23, 1 Peter 1:13-16, 1 Peter 3:13-17*.

CONSIDER Almighty God – El Shaddai – is all sufficient. What does He expect from us in response?

- God is always on time. Is there something you think He is running late on? **Be patient, He is El Shaddai.**
- God wants a blameless, upright, holy walk from you. How will this impact your behaviour? **Be holy, as He is holy.**
- Only His grace makes this possible. But grace is known in your active faith. **Present yourself to Him fully.**
- How different are we from the world? Is our speech different? Do we dress differently? Or have we conformed to the world? *“Wherefore come out from among them, and be ye separate, saith the Lord,” 2 Corinthians 6:17*

PRAY

- Upcoming events – Shepherd School 10/24-11/4, Church fast 11/28-12/2
- Local outreaches & ministries – Street Evangelism, Barn Blessing 10/8, St. John in Exile 10/14 & 15
- Prayer ministry – Church Sunday evenings, Women's Tuesday, Men's Saturday, During church services in prayer room
- Church Bible studies – Foundations Class, Inductive Bible Study Class, Women's Bible Study, Home Fellowships
- Ethiopia mission – Great opportunity has opened for pastoral training in 2017. How will the Lord provide?
- St. John in Exile – that people would invite the unsaved to come and “see” the gospel message