

Genesis 17:1-27 **Abram to Abraham at Age 99**

¹ "When Abram was ninety-nine years old, the LORD appeared to Abram and said to him, "I am Almighty God; walk before Me and be blameless. ² And I will make My covenant between Me and you, and will multiply you exceedingly." ³ Then Abram fell on his face, and God talked with him, saying: ⁴ "As for Me, behold, My covenant is with you, and you shall be a father of many nations. ⁵ No longer shall your name be called Abram, but your name shall be Abraham; for I have made you a father of many nations. ⁶ I will make you exceedingly fruitful; and I will make nations of you, and kings shall come from you. ⁷ And I will establish My covenant between Me and you and your descendants after you in their generations, for an everlasting covenant, to be God to you and your descendants after you. ⁸ Also I give to you and your descendants after you the land in which you are a stranger, all the land of Canaan, as an everlasting possession; and I will be their God."

COVENANT OF CIRCUMCISION

⁹ "And God said to Abraham: "As for you, you shall keep My covenant, you and your descendants after you throughout their generations. ¹⁰ 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; ¹¹ and you shall be circumcised in the flesh of your foreskins, and it shall be a sign of the covenant between Me and you. ¹² He who is eight days old among you shall be circumcised, every male child in your generations, he who is born in your house or bought with money from any foreigner who is not your descendant. ¹³ He who is born in your house and he who is bought with your money must be circumcised, and My covenant shall be in your flesh for an everlasting covenant. ¹⁴ And the uncircumcised male child, who is not circumcised in the flesh of his foreskin, that person shall be cut off from his people; he has broken My covenant."

SARAH BLESSED – NAME CHANGED FROM SARAI

¹⁵ "Then God said to Abraham, "As for Sarai your wife, you shall not call her name Sarai, but Sarah shall be her name. ¹⁶ And I will bless her and also give you a son by her; then I will bless her, and she shall be a mother of nations; kings of peoples shall be from her."

ABRAHAM PLEADS FOR ISHMAEL

¹⁷ "Then Abraham fell on his face and laughed, and said in his heart, "Shall a child be born to a man who is one hundred years old? And shall Sarah, who is ninety years old, bear a child?" ¹⁸ And Abraham said to God, "Oh, that Ishmael might live before You!"

GOD ESTABLISHED THE COVENANT WITH ISAAC AND BLESSED ISHMAEL

¹⁹ "Then God said: "No, Sarah your wife shall bear you a son, and you shall call his name Isaac; I will establish My covenant with him for an everlasting covenant, and with his descendants after him.

²⁰ And as for Ishmael, I have heard you. Behold, I have blessed him, and will make him fruitful, and will multiply him exceedingly. He shall beget twelve princes, and I will make him a great nation.

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

GOD ASCENDED BEFORE ABRAHAM

²² "Then He finished talking with him, and God went up from Abraham.

AT AGE 99, ABRAHAM AND ALL HIS MALES WERE CIRCUMCISED, ISHMAEL WAS 13

²³ "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. ²⁴ Abraham was ninety-nine years old when he was circumcised in the flesh of his foreskin. ²⁵ And Ishmael his son was thirteen years old when he was circumcised in the flesh of his foreskin. ²⁶ That very same day Abraham was circumcised, and his son Ishmael; ²⁷ and all the men of his house, born in the house or bought with money from a foreigner, were circumcised with him.” NKJV

Facts revealed:

Verses 1-8 **Abram becomes Abraham (age 99) Covenant of Descendants and Land**

- ✧ God again appeared to Abram visibly at God’s own timing when Abram and Sarai knew they were well past the time of starting a family with Abram being 99 years old and Sarai 89. No matter how hard they tried to have children from their youth, they remained childless.
- ✧ This is a revelation of God’s desire for His people and that is to be *fully dependant* on God for everything.
- ✧ King David is a prime example, as revealed in the book of the Psalms, where David expressed his total dependence on God in every situation and God acknowledged David as a “man after My own heart.” [1 Samuel 13:14, Acts 13:22]
- ✧ It also revealed **God’s purpose for mankind** from the beginning to the end when God says “**I will be their God and they shall be My people.**” [Genesis 17:8, Exodus 6:7, Leviticus 26:12, Jeremiah 7:23; 11:4; 24:7; 30:22; 31:33; 32:38, Ezekiel 11:20; 14:11; 34:30; 36:28; 37:23, 27, Hosea 2:23, Zechariah 8:8; 13:9, 2 Corinthians 6:16, Hebrews 8:10, Revelation 21:7]
We must do our best to obey God in every thing and trust Him for everything.
- ✧ God introduced Himself to Abram as **El Shaday** (God Almighty – NOURISHING SUSTAINER).
- ✧ **PROMISE: “I will make you exceedingly fruitful; and I will make nations of you, and kings shall come from you.” PROMISE: “I will give you and your descendants after you THE LAND in which you are a stranger, ALL THE LAND of Canaan, as an everlasting possession; and PROMISE: I will be their God.”** This promise is the blessing that was given to Isaac, then Jacob - - by the Almighty Himself.
- ✧ God set a condition for His promise, “**Walk before me and be blameless** (Hebrew: “tam” - perfect).” It is interesting to note that this is a condition Jesus placed on his followers also when He expounded on the law and said, “**Therefore you shall be perfect just as your Father in heaven is perfect.**” [Matthew 5:48]
- ✧ God said, And I will make my covenant between Me and you, and will **multiply you exceedingly.**” So again at a very old age God is still promising Abram a multitude of descendants.
- ✧ Abram demonstrated the proper reaction to the visible presence of Almighty God and *fell on his face before God*. Even in Heaven the Saints of the Lord who had arrived as elders in the presence of God also *fell on their faces* before the throne. [Revelation 4:1-9]
- ✧ Again God promised that Abram would be the **father of many nations, including kings**, changing his name from Abram to **Abraham** which means **father of a multitude**.
- ✧ God’s Covenant is an Everlasting Covenant **to be God to Abraham and to his descendants**. This is God’s great desire for His people for all times, Old and New Testament alike, **for us to acknowledge Him as God and for us to be His people.** [Exodus 6:7, Leviticus 26:12, Jeremiah 7:23; 11:4; 30:22, Ezekiel 36:28, Revelation 21:3]
- ✧ Again God promised to give Abraham the **Land of Canaan** as an *everlasting possession* and He said, “**I will be their God.**”
- ✧ When God says something He means what He says. But when He repeats the concept, He is underlining it and making it stand out as *extra important* to Him. This Covenant and it’s conditions, God stresses over-and-over because of its great importance.

Verses 9-14 **Covenant of Circumcision**

- ✧ Then God said, “As for you, you shall keep My Covenant, you and your descendants after you throughout their generations. This is a sacred covenant that requires our adherence for all time and goes far beyond the circumcision of the flesh and applies to the heart and will as well. [[Romans 2:25-29](#), [Deuteronomy 10:16](#); [30:6](#)]
- ✧ Every male that belongs to Abraham is included in the Covenant and is to receive the Sign of Circumcision in his flesh, including Abraham’s servants. There is a punishment for those who refuse to obey this command.
- ✧ Circumcision is to be done on the 8th day for the new born.
Muslims deliberately violate this commandment by making it at age 13, because that is the age at which Ishmael received circumcision when it was first commanded and they ignore the fact that Abraham was 99. So they are not following the precedent.

Verses 15-16 **Sarai’s Name changed to Sarah, and the Blessing**

- ✧ At this time, 13 years after Sarai and Abram made the *wrong impatient choice* that ended in the conception of Ishmael, God finally speaks of **Sarai** (‘contentious’) and changes her name to **Sarah** (‘princess’) with the promise to give them a child through her saying, “**I will bless her and she shall be a mother of nations, kings of peoples shall be from her.**”
- ✧ This reveals that God wants us to continue to believe what He says and not to try to do it ourselves, but to **wait on the Lord patiently**. even when it appears to be moving into the impossible. This greatly applies to our SALVATION, setting a precedent.
- ✧ The need to learn to wait patiently, keeping the faith, is similar to the need to keep the faith believing in the return of Jesus and the Kingdom of God. A story that illustrates this is of the two servants - one is faithful, and the other who gives up because of the time delay. [[Matthew 24:45-51](#)]

Verses 17-21 **Ishmael or Isaac**

- ✧ Abraham still looked at the impossibility of the *age factor* since he would be 100 years old and Sarah was 90; and pleaded for Ishmael to be the heir since he already had that son.
- ✧ God said, “**NO!**” but that Isaac would be born to Sarah and that God would establish His Covenant with Isaac for an Everlasting Covenant and with his descendants after him.’
Muslim Koran claims that the covenant of God passed to Ishmael, but God was very specific and rejected that idea when Abraham asked.

God made sure there could be no mistake about it and clearly stated that the Covenant would pass **only** through Isaac.

- ✧ However, God did make allowance and blessing for Ishmael because of Abraham’s request and said, “As for Ishmael, I **have** heard you. Behold I **have** blessed him and will make him fruitful, and will multiply him exceedingly. He shall beget twelve princes, and I will make him a great nation. **But My covenant I will establish with Isaac**, whom Sarah shall bear to you at this set time next year.”
- ✧ Thus God, even though He had blessed Ishmael, God confirmed again that the covenant would pass through Isaac only.

Verse 22 **Ascension**

- ✧ When He (God) finished talking with Abraham, Elohiym (God) **ascended** up from Abraham.

- ✧ Thus God is setting a precedent that was repeated when Jesus ascended up from talking with His disciples after His resurrection [Mark 16:19, Luke 24:51, Acts 1:1-2, Ephesians 4:8-10] making this one of the signs as evidence that Jesus is “Elohiym.” There are other times when God repeated this marvel and ascended up in front of others through the Old Testament. [see Judges 13:20-21]

Verses 23-27 **Circumcision of Abraham and All His Males**

- ✧ Abraham was 99-years-old when he was circumcised.
- ✧ Ishmael was 13-years-old when he was circumcised, thus he did come under the blessing of God *in regard to the multitude of descendants*.
- ✧ Every male in Abraham’s household was circumcised and also became a partaker of the blessings promised to Abraham except for the **Covenant Blessing** which passed on only through Isaac.
- ✧ This sets a precedent for “whosoever will” to be joined to God’s people as in the New Covenant through Messiah Jesus, and the concept was applicable when the Children of Israel left Egypt and the *great multitude of mixed people* who went with them. [Exodus 12:38 see also Esther 8:17, Revelation 7:9-10 and 22:17]
- ✧ God always has room for anyone who comes to Him *in faith*.