

January 31, 2016

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, that I may make my covenant between me and you, and may multiply you greatly." Genesis 17:1–2 (ESV)

When God is silent, it doesn't mean he **isn't working**.

God's name is El Shaddai. He loves to save against **insurmountable odds**.

God's covenant is not based on obedience but it **requires obedience** to experience its blessings.

Then Abram fell on his face. And God said to him, "Behold, my covenant is with you, and you shall be the father of a multitude of nations. 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. I will make you exceedingly fruitful, and I will make you into nations, and kings shall come from you. 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. 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." Genesis 17:3–8 (ESV)

And God said to Abraham, "As for Sarai your wife, you shall not call her name Sarai, but Sarah shall be her name. 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." Genesis 17:15–16 (ESV)

A covenant involves a **new name** because it represents a new identity.

And God said to Abraham, "As for you, you shall keep my covenant, you and your offspring after you throughout their generations. This is my covenant, which you shall keep, between me and you and your offspring after you: Every male among you shall be circumcised. You shall be circumcised in the flesh of your foreskins, and it shall be a sign of the covenant between me and you. 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, 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. 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." Genesis 17:9–14 (ESV)

A covenant involves a **sign** to memorialize the relationship

1. Why did God choose circumcision as a sign of the covenant?
2. Does God want men just circumcised in their body?

Circumcise therefore the foreskin of your heart, and be no longer stubborn. Deuteronomy 10:16 (ESV)

And the Lord your God will circumcise your heart and the heart of your offspring, so that you will love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul, that you may live. Deuteronomy 30:6 (ESV)

For no one is a Jew who is merely one outwardly, nor is circumcision outward and physical. But a Jew is one inwardly, and circumcision is a matter of the heart, by the Spirit, not by the letter. His praise is not from man but from God. Romans 2:28–29 (ESV)

3. Why did God want children of the covenant circumcised on the eighth day?
4. Do Christians need to be circumcised?
5. Is there anything that corresponds to circumcision today?

In him also you were circumcised with a circumcision made without hands, by putting off the body of the flesh, by the circumcision of Christ, having been buried with him in baptism, in which you were also raised with him through faith in the powerful working of God, who raised him from the dead. And you, who were dead in your trespasses and the

uncircumcision of your flesh, God made alive together with him, having forgiven us all our trespasses, Colossians 2:11–13 (ESV)

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?” And Abraham said to God, “Oh that Ishmael might live before you!” 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. 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. But I will establish my covenant with Isaac, whom Sarah shall bear to you at this time next year.” Genesis 17:17–21 (ESV)

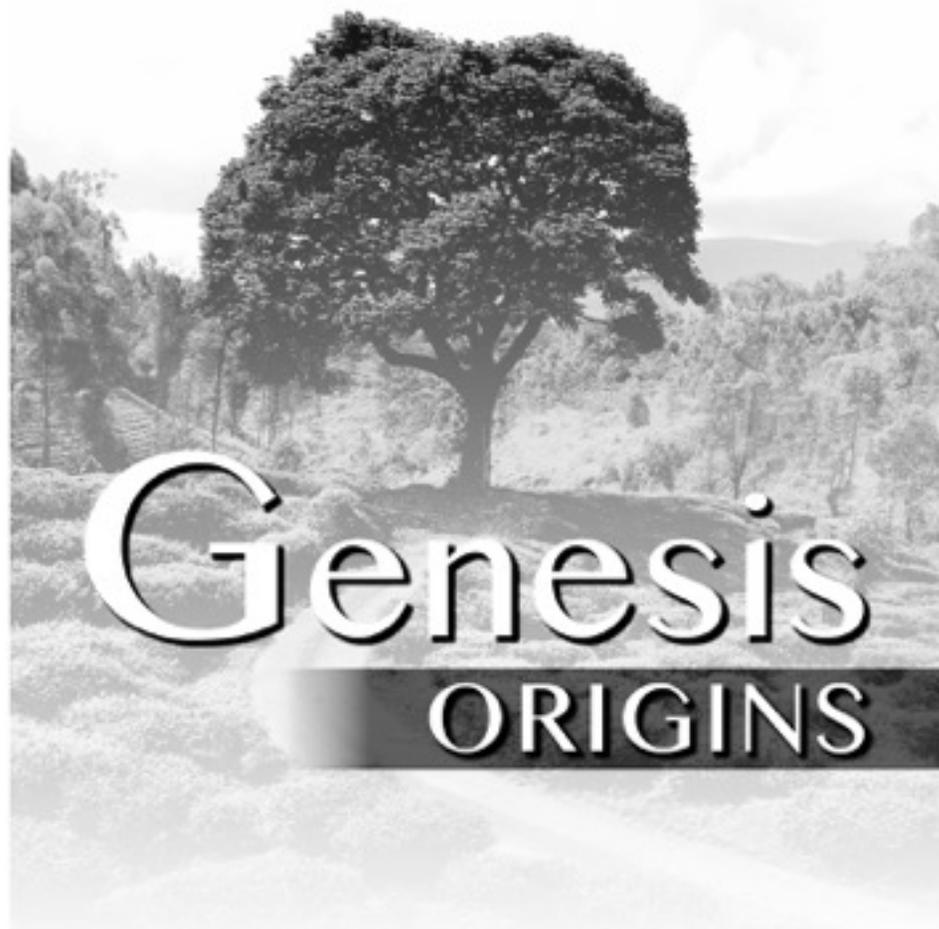
When he had finished talking with him, God went up from Abraham. Then Abraham took Ishmael his son and all those born in his house or bought with his money, every male among the men of Abraham’s house, and he circumcised the flesh of their foreskins that very day, as God had said to him. Abraham was ninety-nine years old when he was circumcised in the flesh of his foreskin. And Ishmael his son was thirteen years old when he was circumcised in the flesh of his foreskin. That very day Abraham and his son Ishmael were circumcised. And all the men of his house, those born in the house and those bought with money from a foreigner, were circumcised with him. Genesis 17:22–27 (ESV)

When you know what God wants you to do, don’t procrastinate, even if it hurts.

Applications

1. When God is silent, it doesn’t mean he isn’t working.
2. God is El Shaddai, God Almighty. He loves to save against insurmountable odds.
3. A covenant is not based on obedience but it requires obedience.
4. God cares about the circumcision of our hearts, more than the circumcision of our body.
5. When I know what God wants me to do, don’t procrastinate, even if it hurts.

February 7 — Genesis 18 - The Lord Appears to Abraham.
February 14 — Genesis 19 - God Rescues Lot



Genesis 17 — Covenant



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